CBW
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly • 2 November 1996 • Issue 242

GOING DUTCH

Maastricht in the spotlight

SHEARINGS TAKES OFF

Expanded European air-coach programme

SMART MONEY

Time for a refurb?

All the PSV News 4-15 ● Tour News 16&17 ● Legal News 18&19 ● Marksman 20 ● Diary 22 ● Letters 24&25 ● Refurbishment 27-33 ● Deals 34-37 ● People 55

1994 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE 12M
49/53 recliners, grey/red moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished white/rose/gold.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1993 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PREMIERE 350 12M
53 recliners, red/black stripe moquette, rear continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, courier seat, power entrance door, finished white/orange.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

1991 (August) BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M
51/53 seats, beige/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, driver's sleeping berth, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1997

1991 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
49/53 recliners, grey/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, tinted side windows with blinds, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished all white
M.O.T. OCTOBER 1997

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1991 (October) TOYOTA CAETANO OPTIMO II
21 seats, grey/red moquette, seat belts, courier seat, curtains, drinks machine, power entrance door, finished white/red.
M.O.T. JULY 1997

1990 (August) VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE 12M
51/55 recliners, grey/red moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, coolbox, low driving position power entrance door, finished white/ yellow /brown.
M.O.T. AUGUST 1997

1989 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M
52 recliners, brown/orange moquette, courier seat, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished all white
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1989 BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M
51 seats, grey moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished white/blue/pink.
M.O.T. JUNE 1997

1989 SCANIA K93 DUPLE 320 12M
55 seats, grey/orange moquette,tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1997

1989 LEYLAND TIGER (Cummins 290) DUPLE 340 12M
53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, O/S rear sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, water boiler wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished all white
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1989 LEYLAND TIGER 260 DUPLE 12M
53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, double glazed tinted side windows with pull down blinds, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube finished all white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1997

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken toilet O/S rear, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished cream/grey.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1985 VOLVO B10 BERKHOF ESPRITE 12M
49 recliners, brown/orange moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. JUNE 1997

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Peter Regan of Expressways

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Coach and Bus Week is published by Emap Automotive, part of Emap Business Communications, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS
Tel 01733 467000 Fax 01733 467154

Editor
Mike Morgan 01733 467139
News editor
Mark Williams 01733 467140
e-mail: MarkW@automotive.emap.co.uk
Production editor
Frank Forster 01733 467142
Tourism editor
William Golden 01733 467141
Northern news editor
Andrew Jarosz 0113 2566505
Designer
Tina Golden 01733 467143

Advertisement manager
Hugh Cairns 01733 467151
Advertising Team Leader
Julia Hinkins 01733 467144
Senior Sales executive
James Pask 01733 467145
Sales executive
Leanne Dow 01733 467148
Classified telesales executives
Neil Mason 01733 467147
Michelle Wood 01733 467146

PA to publishing director
Lisa Wilson 01733 467157

Group production manager
Nicky Curd 01733 467121
Production assistants
Debi McGowan 01733 467123
Suzanne Porter 01733 467124

Publishing director
Mark Barton 01733 467136
Managing director
Ian Griffin 01733 467007

Subscriptions 01733 467048
CBW, Emap Automotive Ltd, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DS
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CBW Coach and Bus Week

It's time for fairer fuel taxes

HAVING enjoyed 10 years of further state subsidy, it is inevitable that the rest of Europe has public transport systems way in advance of ours.

In the UK, provision of even such rudimentary essentials as a public transport infrastructure have been regarded as state intervention, or 'nannying' which might upset the credo of the Tories' market economy. As a result, the operator and the public have suffered the worst excesses of car congestion.

At last week's RAI Autobus exhibition in Maastricht, environmental issues were very much at the fore, and demonstrate what can be achieved by a public and private partnership. In Holland, the Government is enabling introduction of LPG by removing tax for bus operators... and ONLY for bus operators. DAF has the engines, and the first operator to buy them? Holland's first privatised municipal.

We'll tell you more about the LPG story next week but, meantime, ponder this; add together the cost of cleaning and repairing inner-city building stone, windows and our clothes. Add in the cost of treating asthma and bronchitis. Then balance this against the political issue of removing duty from 'clean' public transport fuel and putting a miniscule percentage on car petrol (CPT says 0.3p per litre would cover ALL bus diesel duty this year).

Now ask yourself why this hasn't happened. And if you can't work it out, ask your MP.

Mike Morgan
Editor

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events

5-7 November: GNSS 96 — Global Navigation Satellite Systems Conference, The Church House Conference Centre, Dean's Yard, Westminster, London SW1P 3NZ. Details from The Director tel 0171 589 5021/fax 0171 823 8671

14 November: CTA's annual exhibition, Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool. Details from Maggie McCoy on 0161 366 6685

14-16 November: Minibus and Accessible Transport Exhibition, Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool. Details, tel or fax, on 0161 351 1475 or 0161 366 6685

19 November: Trans-Expo 96, Canada's transit and bus exhibition, Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre, Vancouver, Canada. Details on (416) 365-9800, ext 116, fax (416) 365-1295

19 November: Safe School Transport - Sharing the Responsibility (half-day), Stirling Highland Hotel, Stirling. Organised by CPT Scotland, secretary Peter Thompson, tel 0141 639 4984.

19-21 November: Light Rail 96, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, 10th International Conference and Exhibition. Details from Suzanne Pealing, tel 0151 707 0100

23 November: ***CBW*** **Coach Industry Awards, Purbeck Hall, Bournemouth. Book your tables now. Only a few left. Details on 01733 467139**

19 December: Buses Worldwide meeting, Fred Tallent Hall, Drummond Street, London NW1. Details from Ian Johnston, 3 Cypress Drive, Fleet, Hants, GU13 9HE

17-22 February 1997: ***CBW*****/Tappins trip to Hong Kong. Price of £1,095 per head includes sightseeing tour, visit to Hong Kong Bus Company, express coach journey to Canton and tour escorts. Places strictly limited and going fast. Full details from Paul Tappin on 01235 812127, fax 01235 816464.**

"IT'S CAC - CYCLISTS AGAINST CONGESTION"

▼ Coach

Show disruption

THE Lord Mayor's Show in London next Saturday, 9 November, will cause severe traffic disruption in the City, warns the Metropolitan Police Coach Advisory Service.

The big event, which kicks off at 8.30am, will continue to close roads until the afternoon. Visiting coach operators are advised to check details with the police before visiting the capital.

Remembrance Sunday, on the 10th, will cause closure of Whitehall and part of Parliament Square.

On 20 November, a march by the Campaign for Free Education is expected to attract 10,000 people between Malet Street and Kennington Park, and on 24 November, the Christmas Parade is expected to close Park Lane northbound, with associated delays.

● Details of all coach-related problems, and copies of the new London Tourist Coach Parking Map, are available from Sergeant Ian Fray, on 0171 230 3561, fax 0171 230 3567, e-mail *hq.traffic.mp.nsy@gtnet.gov.uk*

▼ Coach and Bus

Council-run op image is

All buses to have major refurb

by Mark Williams

THE Isle of Wight's council-run school bus operator, County Bus, has revamped its image and is heading for a dedicated, semi-commercial fleet.

Renamed WightBus, the operator has bought two, new dual-role Caetano Porto 57-seaters on Javelin 240, six 43-seat UVG UrbanStar buses on Dart 9.8 chassis, and a CityStar 33-seater, based on Mercedes-Benz 811D chassis-cowl as its front-line vehicles, all on lease.

The change of image includes a complete respray for the 27-strong fleet, which daily transports 1,200 children to and from school. Gone is the banana yellow, to make way for a blue and yellow design.

"The finance lease deal with Phoenix Leasing breaks new ground for us," said public transport manager Andy Morris. "As a result, leasing will form part of every purchase investiga-

▼ Coach and Bus

Stocks to quit bus?

GMB North is in negotiation to buy commercial bus services run by Stocks of Oldham. The talks were initiated by Stocks, which is understood to be keen to get out of bussing and concentrate its effort on coach operation. But although they started the process some time ago, GMBN's acquisition by FirstBus rescheduled the negotiations "We are now starting to see the wood for the trees," said a spokesman for GMBN. "We have a willing buyer and a willing seller, so I see few problems."

▼ Coach and Bus

Century impresses and confuses at RAI

IRIZAR'S stylish new Century was one of the most impressive and most confusing new coaches at Maastricht. Impressive because of its stylish redesign and well-executed interior design changes. Confusing because of its name: 15.37. The 15 refers to the length (which is, in fact, 14.5 metres) and the 37 refers to the height (ie, 3.7 metres). Width is the newly-allowed 2.55 metres. Seen from the back, stylistic changes have been made to include an integrated reversing camera and improve aerodynamics to help keep the paintwork clean.

Numbers game: big Irizar stunner at RAI expo in Maastricht

The air-conditioning unit is in a roof pod which allows simpler pipe routeing.

Meanwhile, on the bus scene, DAF unveiled its third and most refined LPG engine — the purpose-built 8.65-litre unit which uses microchip technology to reduce emissions.

The engine series has already taken off in Europe, with the horizontal DAF LPG engine slotted into a Berkhof bus (see front cover) for Eindhoven operator Hermes.

■ Full Autobus RAI coverage is on pages 8 and 9, this issue. And next week, we begin a two-part investigation of Holland's new move towards LPG city buses

school bus revamped

including lap-and-diagonal belts

tion in future." WightBus is the second-largest operator on the island after Southern Vectis, but runs only a third of school bus services, the rest being provided with subsidised term bus passes by Southern Vectis.

"Southern Vectis works 90 per cent of all service bus routes, but we work in a symbiotic relationship," said Mr Morris. "We are getting more diverse, and will be using the Portos for excursion work. We already run a commercial dial-a-ride service." Though the new vehicles are the first to have seatbelts, WightBus has gone the whole hog; this week, all buses will have a major refurbishment which includes the fitting of seats with lap-and-diagonal belts.

● Highland Council is continuing to consider providing its own bus fleet for some public service and school contracts — despite operator claims the move will prove unviable.

The authority began pursuing this option after receiving what it described as "unacceptably high" tenders for certain public service routes. Its education service is also expecting to find significantly increased prices quoted for school bus contracts when it meets to discuss tenders on 5 November. "Tenders are certainly up on last time," the council's principal transport officer Cameron Kemp said. "There must be a point at which we can do it as cheaply as the operators can — we have been given to understand that legally we can do it."

However, Mr Kemp insists no decision on the option will be taken until all tenders have been reviewed. At least one prominent operator in the area — Highland Country Buses — has cast doubt on whether the council can viably establish its own fleet, adding that it is prepared to work with the authority to achieve the best outcome all round.

■ **Refurb feature, ps 27-33**

New fleet and logo (inset) for the WightBus crew

▼ Coach and Bus

'Worrying' figures

ESSEX Police have revealed worrying figures from school bus checks to counter allegations that they are being alarmist.

Operators in the Essex region claim a flawed press release (*CBW*, 26 October) suggested 22 out of 76 school buses checked got immediate prohibitions, and this combined with inflated claims about school bus safety have painted the industry in a poor light.

But the latest lists of defects suggests that only half of all vehicles have been fault-free, and more than one in five collected immediate prohibitions.

Pc Harry Sexton, who helped organise the crackdown, said that, out of 91 vehicles checked, 19 immediate prohibitions were issued, 26 delayed and 30 defect notices. Only 45 vehicles were given the all-clear. He also explained delays reported by operators (*CBW*, 19 October).

"I have checked the operators who claimed they were unnecessarily delayed. One vehicle had been given an immediate prohibition, and another who claimed the check had lost him a contract had six vehicles, all of which were defective."

The most common fault was locked or faulty emergency exits and warning buzzers, said Pc Sexton.

● Due to a typographical error last week, the figure '76' was printed as 'six.'

▼ Bus

Quality key for Midland Fox

MIDLAND Fox has upgraded the fleet plying the Quality Partnership routes it runs, in conjunction with the council, with 13 new Olympians.

The £1.4 million investment in Northern Counties Countybuses includes a new, blue livery with 'glow in the dark' fox and the Urban Fox branding. Already, upgrades on the Welford Road corridor, bus laning and better marketing have lifted passenger numbers in September by 1.5 per cent.

■ **Quality partnerships are the way ahead... says the CPT and European Commissioner Neil Kinnock — full conference report starts on page 10**

▼ Coach

Raglan crash operator fined

COACH operator Ronald Lewis was fined £750 after admitting four charges that the Raglan coach crash vehicle had faulty brakes and speed limiter.

The DAF coach overturned on to a roundabout last year. Ten people were killed and 31 injured in the accident.

Mr Lewis, of Cwmaman, said after the court hearing that the horror of the incident would live with him for the rest of his life. His company, Lewis Motors, has since ceased trading and he would now permanently leave the industry.

"I have been driving buses for 25 years, and I still have no idea why the accident happened," he told a local newspaper.

"I have seen the devastation caused to the families of the people who died," he said.

Charges against the driver of the coach, Philip Crisp, will be heard on 4 December.

He faces 10 counts of causing death by dangerous driving.

CBW

● ● ● *inside TRANSIT this week* ● ● ● *inside TRANSIT this week* ● ● ● *inside TRANSIT this week*

News

LABOUR'S Glenda Jackson uses CPT's recent conference to step up the onslaught on excessive bureaucracy in London. Is London Transport Buses tying up bus provision in the capital in its own red tape?

FirstBus and Cowie move to buy up competitors. No change there. But, quality partnerships are now beginning to bring real results — in Liverpool, Glasgow and Stoke. Are they the way forward?

MTL's Peter Coombes tells us why a rail franchise is so important to the largest independent bus operator in the UK. And find out why Opraf thinks rail privatisation so far has already brought passenger benefits and how National Express-owned Midland Main Line has played its part in delivering them.

Plus

What Labour's Keith Bradley will do to achieve an integrated transport policy if his party gets in.

Analysis

Southern Vectis is quietly getting on with the job. But how well is it doing it? And what is the most profitable part of the empire that owns Wallace Arnold? Full profit and loss, balance sheet and cash flow analysis this issue.

And of course...

There's all the top jobs in the industry — from, among others, Stagecoach and MTL. Isn't it about time you took out a subscription? Fill out the form on page 55 NOW!

In brief

Violence advice

A NEW booklet published by the Health and Safety Executive gives employers advice to help stem the growing menace of violence in the workplace. *Violence at Work - a Guide for Employers* says sound management policies can reduce the incidence of violence and reduce costs associated with it. The booklet comes in the wake of a spate of attacks on bus drivers. It is available free by phoning 01787 881165

AIRporter

AIRPORT travel from Coleraine, in Northern Ireland, is being made easier by AIRporter - a coach service being run in the province to link with Belfast Airport. Run by Brian Smyth, the five-day-a-week service uses a single Mercedes-Benz minicoach at fares from £15 return.

Quality service

GARDNER is to keep its ISO 9001 quality standard for a further three years. The Manchester-based engine manufacturer has also had its Quality Management System extended to re-manufactured engines and other engineering services.

Shelter error

COUNCIL workers in Gloucestershire given the job of knocking down a rusty and vandalised bus shelter instead spent the day demolishing a recently-refurbished one 100 yards further down the road. The mistake came to light when residents of Barlow Road, Cheltenham, set out to catch their morning buses to work.

£40m orders

MAYFLOWER Corporation's acquisition of Walter Alexander of Falkirk has helped it quadruple export orders to a £40 million total. The demand has come chiefly from the Far East, and includes a 185-bus order from Hong Kong's Kowloon Motor Bus.

Three levels in new Iliade range

▼ Coach and Bus

MITCAR sees Iliade launch

Renault range replaces FRIs

by Bill Godwin

RENAULT launched a new range of coaches to replace its FR1 'family' during the French MITCAR show held in Paris.

The Iliade range has nine models, catering for the needs of local, interurban, touring and super-executive touring operators. The lower end of the range carries a 'T' suffix, the mid-range are designated 'R' and top of the range are the new GT, GTC and GTX vehicles.

The exterior has been extensively redesigned, with reprofiled mirrors, dashboard and instrument panel. The driver seat is a standard air-suspension model with three-point belt and head rest, and adjustable steering wheel. And the engine is a new, 380 BHP model meeting Euro 2 specification.

The range will account for around 40 per cent of production at Renault's Annonay plant near Lyon, and 55 per cent of all sales, excluding Renault's Czech partner Karosa. Total touring coach market in France is around 800 units.

Renault also launched its Recreo school bus, bodied by Karosa to meet French local authority need for a cheap vehicle, and an MRC midicoach chassied by Ponticelli and bodied by Carrier.

It also showed off an Obradors-built 12-metre bus based on the PR100 chassis.

Inter-urban bus is Iveco/Castrosua tie-up

...and Iveco's Spanish style

IVECO put its stamp on MITCAR with a EuroRider 391.12.29-based bus bodied by Castrosua of Spain.

The vehicle is designed with interurban work in mind, fitted with air suspension all round and torsion bar stabilisers front and back.

Built around a corrosion-proofed frame of tubular steel, it has an aluminium floor pan and galvanised panelling, with GRP front and rear spoilers.

Braking is provided by discs at the front, drums at the rear, and the vehicle comes as standard with Telma retarder, ABS and ASR, sharing the componentry with its coach chassis ancestry.

What happened at RAI? Pages 8&9

▼ Minibus

Practicalities prompted Crystals' restructuring

FULL details of Crystals' restructuring (*CBW*, 26 October) emerged last week.

The Doncaster-based converters' new management team includes managing director Chris Springham, working alongside operations manager Gary Betts, production manager Matthew Skelton, and workshop manager Peter Vernon. Despite a 40 per cent reduction in the workforce, Crystals is maintaining production levels.

"Traditionally, we have always operated a one man/one bus build regime," said Mr Springham. "However, this build regime is no longer practical, nor had it been for some considerable time." Instead, Crystals has moved to a team-build technique, and reports improved morale.

The partnership voluntary agreement, arranged with accountants, went ahead with 100 per cent backing of creditors.

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23-27 OCTOBER 1996
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Rai round-up

THE atmosphere at this year's show was decidedly downbeat. Visitor numbers were generally expected to be down and the talk was of the industry being hit by a sort of triple whammy of legislative upheaval, increased competition and a drop in business.

Deregulation and privatisation are beginning to bite in Holland and Belgium. US conglomerate Vancom has taken over public transport provision in Maastricht. And three Belgian public transport companies have been bought out by Linje Buss of Sweden.

■ VAN Hool used Maastricht to launch the T915 Alicron, the second vehicle type within its new T9 range. It differs from the T915 Acron in height only: 3.47 metres compared with 3.66 metres. When it comes to coach length, Van Hool says 13.5-metre vehicles are outselling 15-metre versions in Holland.

■ SCANIA unveiled its new L941B inter-urban chassis — fitted with an Irizar InterCentury body — at the show. Although marketed as a no-thrills variant of this popular body/chassis combination, the 55-seat InterCentury comes with air conditioning as standard. Power is provided by Scania's 310 hp DSC915, driving through its own comfort shift gearbox.

■ NEOPLAN'S amazing Starliner created as much interest as it did in Hanover (*CBW*, 5 October), giving the Maastricht show a welcome lift. Many claim innovation, Neoplan has truly delivered it with this incredible vehicle. The space age interior is spectacular and it is the first coach ever to be fitted with EBS (electronic braking system) as standard. GPS satellite navigation system is an optional extra.

■ PRIZE for the wackiest looking vehicle at RAI must go to the ParkShuttle people mover from Akkermans. Driven by a computer, the bubble -like car seats six plus two standees at speeds up to 30 km/h and is guided by electronic sensors buried in the road surface. Passengers summon it by pressing a button. In the vehicle, passengers can indicate on a panel where they want to go. The computer does the rest. ZWN is to trial three vehicles in Rotterdam. Projected journey time for the 1200-metre stretch is three to four minutes.

Berkhof's response to European operator demand for more usable space in a reasonably compact package won't be available until next January when it will launch a 12.9-metre version of its new Axial body. The new length will be available on the 3.55-metre high Axial 50 and the new 3.70-metre high Axial 70 launched at the show. This model was shown at Maastricht in 12-metre form on DAF SB 3000 chassis with 50 seats. The 12.9-metre version will allow 57 similarly pitched seats and around 13 cubic metres of luggage space. All new model year Axials will be fitted with a roll bar as standard to give added roll over protection.

Bova's high-floor FH series is now available in three lengths: 10.4-metre, 12-metre and... 12.7-metre. In this case the extra 70 cm allows an additional four seats to be fitted. Designation is FH13 and power is provided by either DAF or MAN engines. Under the descriptive Magnum badge, the FH is also available in tri-axle 13.6-metre and 15-metre variants.

Dutch bodybuilder BUSiness re-engineers Citroen, Peugeot or Fiat chassis cowls to give a mid-ships floor height of 32cm on its BUSiness 2002. Air suspension allows that to be lowered by another 5 cm. Maximum carrying capacity is 25 people, boarding through 120 cm wide double doors. The body is plastic, reinforced with glass fibre, and built over an aluminium frame. Cost is around 135,000 DG (approx. £50,000).

▼ Coach and Bus

The

Size is becoming THE major issue in European coach design. Last year, Autobus RAI was swamped by 13.5 and 15-metre giants. This year, manufacturers used the Maastricht show as the launchpad for a range of 12.7-metre designs. Meanwhile, Euro mini builders continue to show the UK how it's done — great looks, build quality and low floors. Mark Barton reports

AUTOBUS RAI 96
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DAILY 10 A.M.-6 P.M.
mecc Maastricht

short and the long of it

This small Transit-based mini caught the eye of two British coach operators looking for a stylish, yet affordable small vehicle. Built by Ferque in Spain, but imported into the low countries by Omnibus Trading of Arnhem, the aptly named Bambino has 13 seats and electric power door. Right-hand-drive versions are available — Ferque builds for the South African market. Price is 90,000 DG (approx. £33,000) including air conditioning.

The dimensions of Irizar's confusingly-named 15.37 Century — 14.5 m long x 3.7 m high x 2.55 m wide — basically add up to 56 Royal Class seats or 61 three-star seats. Most noticeable outward difference of the new vehicle is the restyled front end, with new light clusters. Other improvements on the old style model are a faux wood dashboard and luggage rack trim; Ergos seats with washable covers; a 'plip' key fob to automatically open the door and set the alarm; and an ingenious revolving, space-saving toilet door. The new-style Century will be available in the UK from next September. Its 15.37 dimensions will have to wait until the Government changes the law.

Another stylish mini based on Citroen, Peugeot or Fiat chassis cowls is the Q96 from Q Bus (left). Built by the Dutch state-owned VSN group, which also runs 6,000 buses and 10,000 minis in Dutch towns, the Q96 has twin doors, a 25cm high flat floor and will take a maximum of 22 passengers. Body is in Aramide plastic, produced by Akzo in Holland. Q Bus claims it is seven times stronger than steel, but lighter. Price given at the show is 160,000 DG (approx. £60,000). The first three Q96s have been sold to ZWN in Gouda.

How to get more return out of the same number of wheels. That's how Jonckheere explains the design brief behind its new 12.76-metre version of the Mistral 50 and 70 (shown here) on display on its own and Volvo's stand. The demands of tour operators are simple, says Jonckheere: more seats and less cost per seat. The extra 78cms on these models allows the number of seats classified three star under the IRU star rating system to be increased to 53 and the number of Royal Class seats to be increased from 36 to 42. Turning circle remains reasonably tight. The extension of the front overhang allows the crew compartment to be built ahead of the front axle and, on B10M chassis, the driveline module can be moved rearward as a single unit allowing more luggage space. Volvo uses its B12 tri-axle chassis as the basis for even larger, 15-metre coaches.

CBW

▼ Coach and Bus

Commissioner wins delegates' backing

Kinnock carefully targets industry in rousing speech

by Mark Williams

EUROPEAN Commissioner for Transport Neil Kinnock got the backing of the Confederation of Passenger Transport for his rousing speech at last week's conference.

Mr Kinnock carefully targeted the industry by explaining the thinking behind the EC's two green papers — the *Citizens Network*, and *Fair and Efficient Pricing in Transport*. The two proposals should, he said, be considered together.

"When I took up my position as transport commissioner... and announced my intention to produce a document on the development of public passenger transport, there were those who said 'Surely this is an area where the Commission has no interest — and no business'," Mr Kinnock began.

"When I published that paper... and advocated a wide-ranging debate, there were those who said only a few lobby groups will be interested. I am happy to say they were wrong."

Mr Kinnock said the 170 formal responses received, backed by 250 delegates to the Citizens Network Forum in Brussels in June underlined the degree of importance attached to its development.

"I believe that transport professionals and users want to get involved in action that can lead to improving transport efficiency and transport sustainability, and I have consequently tried to ensure increasing opportunities for that to happen."

Mr Kinnock said bus travel declining by a quarter, rail travel down, and a massive 120 per cent rise in car travel had made the establishment of integrated transport a necessity.

"All assessments show that the demand for mobility will continue to increase," said Mr Kinnock.

"But since major expansion of the road network is neither economically affordable nor environmentally desirable, it is obvious that — by a variety of means — we must make better, more rational, more cost effective and more ecologically responsible use of the infrastructure that exists."

Among measures the EU is taking, he said, are co-ordination of research and development and general cajoling of local and national government to formulate ways to reduce car use by establishing networked personal and public transport.

In particular, Mr Kinnock endorsed the CPT's promotion of Quality Partnerships between public and private sectors, and implored such initiatives to take into account passengers' views.

"But when the alternative is commercial thrombosis, near immobility for those with cars, and exclusion from the many economic and social activities for those without cars, the challenge has to be met," he said.

Mr Kinnock reassured delegates that scare stories suggesting the end of the heavily-seated, British-style bus, and compulsory accessibility for coaches, have no substance: "The headlines claiming that Brussels Bureaucrats Ban British Buses are therefore simply not justified in fact," he said, adding that British bus design has been allowed for until a review in 2005.

But the most encouraging element of his keynote address was the suggestion that the EU will be avoiding additional legislation to curb car use and promote public transport by weighting taxation in its favour.

Mr Kinnock said that the balance of regulation and economic control proposed in the *Fair Pricing* green paper would promote local solutions to local problems.

"We published the paper in order to provoke attention to the question of how to bring the prices paid by users of the transport system more closely into line with the real costs that different types of journey impose on society at large — including the costs of congestion, pollution and accidents.

"Our view is that pricing instruments could potentially assist in reducing those costs and in providing an accurate reflection of infrastructure costs more effectively than can be done by regulations."

■ **For a full CPT conference report, turn to pages 12-14.**

Neil Kinnock: 'must use infrastructure better'

Signs of the times: school transport conference

▼ Coach and Bus

Safe school transport event

SCHOOL buses are the subject of a conference to be held in Scotland on 19 November.

Safe School Transport — Sharing the Responsibility addresses the problems posed by seatbelt legislation and the ongoing problems of image within the school transport industry.

Organised by Scottish Confederation of Passenger Transport and supported by Volvo Bus, the event has as its speakers representatives from the Scottish School Board Association, the VI, and School Transport Working Group.

"The Confederation of Passenger Transport UK, Scotland, and the Scottish School Board Association share the common aim of ensuring children travel to school in safety," said Doug Pelling, CPT Scotland chairman. "We believe this can best be achieved by both parties working in support of one another."

Attendance at the half-day conference, which includes a buffet lunch, is free. Full details and bookings from Peter Thompson, tel 0141 639 4984, fax 0141 616 0866.

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Roads and rail minister John Watts

▼ Coach and Bus

Is the answer yes, minister?

Delegates quiz roads and rail supremo

Whittle: '15 metres?'

Charles Evans, Lothian Region Transport

Q "The delay in introduction of the 18-tonne weight limit is a major problem. We have lost 15 per cent of payload on our latest deckers. Can we have dispensation on certain specified routes where there are no bridge problems?"

A "I do not favour a piece meal approach but will take forward consultation rapidly."

Ron Whittle, CPT President

Q "Ministers say there is no objection in principal to 15-metre vehicles yet Government representatives in Brussels have objected. Is this not inconsistent?"

A "The objection is to 15 metre being imposed by a Directive. It should be down to local determination by individual countries."

John Owen, Thamesdown Transport

Q "When will we get a decision on changes to the Traffic Area Offices?"

A "I will write to CPT to give the answer."

Richard Clarke, Brighton Transport

Q "We have invested heavily to improve quality standards yet a new operator can attack us with 20-year-old double deckers. Will you introduce higher standards for new entrants to the industry?"

A "Any new operator faces the same standards as yourself. Any general raising of those standards should be treated in the same way. "Encouraging competition has brought benefits but we do want to encourage an increase in standards."

Peter Sephton, Mainline Group

Q "The service my mother uses to travel from home to the local Conservative head office has suffered from several changes in frequency over the last 10 years. For her there is total instability in the bus service. Surely from the consumers' viewpoint deregulation is a disaster?"

A "Local support for bus services has gone down by 60 per cent but in some areas it has gone too far."

Sephton: hit at dereg

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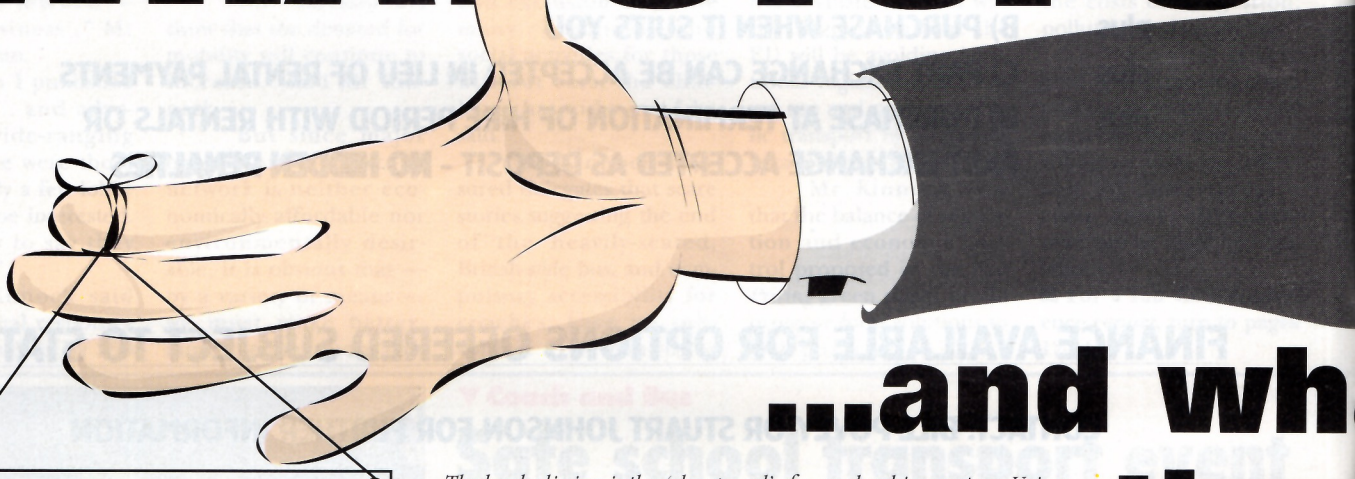

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▼ Coach and Bus

Upping the ante

Event lifts public transport up the political agenda

by Mike Morgan

ALTHOUGH this year's Confederation of Passenger Transport annual conference in Cardiff is the trade association's last, its timing and content was spot on.

The opportunity was taken to lift public transport up the political agenda and high-profile backing was given to quality partnerships.

With the recent EU green paper, *The Citizen's Network*, as its theme and a General Election on the horizon it was an opportunity the transport spokespersons for each of the three main political parties could not refuse.

Labour Transport spokesperson **Glenda Jackson** endorsed EU transport commissioner **Neil Kinnock's** plans for co-ordinated public transport (*CBW*, 26 October, and page 10 this issue). She said it was no surprise there had been a large number of replies to the EU's *Citizens Network* green paper. "People do want to have a say," she said.

Although supporting the pan-European strategies to improve public transport, Ms Jackson wants more decision making at local level, with Government giving a guiding hand "not a dead hand. Choice and empowerment should be at the heart of any policy," she said.

This "helping hand" brings the promise of regulatory powers for local authorities "to ensure quality" and give them "a say in planning local bus networks."

However, when asked by **Brian Fisher** of Plymouth Citybus how the network and the price of that network will be determined she declined to give a clear answer, saying there was a need to take account of the cost of not having a properly integrated system.

She said the question of Fuel Duty Rebate restoration had to be referred to Shadow Treasury spokesman, **Gordon Brown**; describing London Transport as a "world leader in bureaucracy" she said there had to be changes.

Jackson: 'people do want to have a say'

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▼ Coach and Bus

Quality partnerships backed by the CPT

They're the way forward says director general

by Mike Morgan

CPT director general **Veronica Palmer** was quick to identify the common thread running through Labour and Conservative statements on public transport. She said: "They are both talking our language — quality partnerships."

Speaking at the conclusion of the CPT's final annual conference and as news broke of the £21 million Strathclyde Quality Partnership (see this page), Mrs Palmer said: "Quality partnerships overcome the dilemma between regulation and the open market."

With Cardiff as the conference venue it was appropriate that Mrs Palmer announced the launch of CPT Wales as a separate entity with its own constitution, serving members of the trade association in the Principality.

However, the highlight was the political debate which brought three party transport spokespersons on to the same stage - albeit not at the same time.

The scene had already been set by EU transport commissioner, **Neil Kinnock's** keynote address (*CBW*, 26 October, and page 10 this issue) which confirmed CPT president **Ron Whittle's** assertion that, in Commissioner Kinnock, the industry had found a real friend "who genuinely recognises the contribution that public transport can make — indeed must make — if we are to get people throughout Europe moving efficiently."

Liberal Democrat spokesman **David Chidgey** encouraged delegates when he described the freezing of Fuel Duty Rebate as "an unjustified cost burden" that should be reversed. He said that, except in rural areas, buses do not need subsidy if they are given clear roads to make them more efficient. Quality partnerships are the only way forward, said Mr Chidgey. But he claimed that the open market presented the fear of anti-competitive behaviour which prevented quality partnerships being effective.

Chidgey: encouraged

Labour spokesperson **Glenda Jackson** followed Mr Chidgey with her promised regulatory regime through powers given to local authorities (see page 13) and transport minister, **John Watts**, stressed that the benefits of deregulation must not be thrown away. He said he was happy to share the lessons of "best practice" with the European Commission.

The powers of the OFT should be strengthened, said Mr Watts, who wants to curb abuse of market power.

He was concerned about some detail in the proposed Bus and Coach Directive being over prescriptive; promised full consultation on an increase in maximum GVW to 18 tonnes in advance of the end of the derogation in 1999 — though retaining current maximum drive axle weight; and said 15-metre proposals merit further investigation (see page 13).

Earlier delegates heard speeches from: **James Isaac** who reflected back to deregulation which coincided with his year as Bus & Coach Council president; **Graeme Preston**, who presented the "human face" of the European Commission; **Donald Curruthers**, who reviewed the special needs of rural public transport; and **Stuart Reynolds**, who explained Hampshire County Council's New Forest transportation strategy.

Professor **Jose Viegas** flew in from Portugal to explain the implications of public transport's "new role" in relieving congestion and pollution. "Road space is too limited to allow competition on the road," he said.

Dr **Wolfgang Hager** from the European Centre for Infrastructure Studies warned that the drive for efficiency and increasingly more complex technology leads to a monopoly supplier.

Palmer: quick to identify common thread

▼ Bus

Strathclyde Buses: £21 million investment

Backing quality partnerships: Glasgow city councillor Walter MacLellan, Strathclyde PTA chairman councillor Charles Gordon and FirstBus executive chairman Trevor Smallwood

ONE of the major outcomes of the UK's largest Quality Partnership is a £21 million investment in 200 new buses over the next two years which is set to drive Strathclyde Buses into the 21st Century.

Strathclyde, now part of FirstBus, starts its investment with the launch of double-glazed low-floor buses on the Maryhill-to-Tollcross route next month. It also plans an extensive refurbishment programme of its existing single and double-deck buses.

Trevor Smallwood, FirstBus executive chairman, said: "I am convinced that, as we enter the new millennium, bus services are poised to play an increasingly important role in our major cities. It is vital that we continue to improve the quality of our services to encourage new customers as well as making travel easier and more comfortable for existing passengers."

As part of the Quality Partnership with Glasgow City Council and Strathclyde Public Transport Authority, Strathclyde will focus on customer satisfaction.

An action plan requires commitment by the local authority to improve traffic management and bus priority measures and high-tech information systems.

New Strathclyde Buses MD John McCormick says a high-quality, customer-focused service is crucial to public transport's success. CBW

Hong Kong: hovering on the brink of Chinese control

▼ Coach and Bus

A journey full of Eastern promise

by Mark Williams

IT'S the other side of the globe. Its streets are filled with British buses and British business. But as an outpost of the United Kindom, Hong Kong's time is running out.

Possibly the last chance you will have to see its old colonial image and enjoy the leisure side of its transport systems comes next February, when *Coach and Bus Week* and Tappins Coaches escorts a five-day, four-night tour to Hong Kong and takes in the sights. Four months later, the Chinese will be in control.

The object of the tour, however, is not to delve too deeply into Hong Kong's past or future but to enjoy the present. Based at the five-star Excelsior overlooking Causeway Bay, your stay will be luxurious to say the least.

Included in the tour price of £1,095 per head (plus £250 single supplement), your tour will include all room-only accomodation, a sightseeing tour, a visit to the Hong Kong Bus Company, an express coach journey to Canton and tour escorts throughout.

The tour begins with the Virgin flight on Monday, 17 February, with enough time on Tuesday to enjoy the night life. Wednesday starts with sightseeing and an optional Peak Tram journey, sampan trip to a huge, floating restaurant, and ends with optional cocktail party aboard a Hong Kong tram.

Thursday begins with the educational around Hong Kong Citybus, taking a look at its 100-seat, air-conditioned double-deck Dennis Dragon buses. Then it's on to Kowloon to see HKCB's expansion. Friday you can visit Canton's free trade area and go over the border into China, and Saturday there's time for shopping before boarding the return flight.

Full details of the trip are available from Paul Tappin, on 01235 812127, fax 01235 816464, but places at this price are strictly limited. Make sure you book now. CBW

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▼ UK and Europe

Shearings is spreading its ho

Egypt and Turkey feature in air-coach programme

by William Golden

EGYPT, Israel and Turkey are among the new destinations included in an expanded air/coach programme from Shearings Holidays, as the UK's largest coach operator moves away from its traditional market.

In all, the *Europe, Mediterranean and Beyond* brochure features 19 Fly Direct holidays, about 25 per cent of its programme for next year. The move has been prompted by market research which showed customers were more willing to fly to European coach departure points. The Europe programme also features three cruises and four new rail holidays, plus two of Shearings' most popular packages from its USA and Canada programme. These are a Canadian Rockies Panorama and Toronto tour and the Heritage of America and Boston tour. The Fly Direct lead-in price is £374 for a seven night half-board package to Diano Marina.

Shearings has launched its Europe programme alongside an expanded *Sunshine Express* brochure, which follows an excellent 1996 Summer season. The increase in capacity also has been prompted by a further expected increase in business following Airtours withdrawal from the market. Cosmos is also planning to pull out in 1997, giving Shearings about a 20 per cent boost to its coach-beach market.

Sunshine Express offers holidays on the Italian Venetian and Adriatic Rivers, Lake Maggiore and Lake Garda, and the Costa Dorada and Costa Brava, in Spain. Lead-in prices are from £169 for a 10-day Sun Deal to the Costa Brava.

Brian Hawe, Shearings' European product director, said: "The key theme of this year's brochures has been to build on our previous successes, particularly in sectors outside our core coach holiday business.

"We see great potential in Fly Direct, cruise and rail holidays, with the strength of the Shearings brand in the over-55s market fuelling our diversification strategy.

"With Cosmos joining Airtours in flying the white flag, we also anticipate further growth of Sunshine Express, by building on the substantial gains already made over the past two seasons."

Completing the line-up is Shearings' 1997 British brochure, where the company has underlined its commitment to the traditional seaside holiday by investing £8 million in its Coast and Country hotel chain.

There now are 34 properties in the portfolio and the Marine Hotel, in Llandudno, the Royal Esplanade, in Ryde, and the Carlton, in Great Yarmouth, are featured for the first time. Chris Barnes, UK product director, said: "Despite reports to the contrary, the traditional seaside holiday is very much alive and kicking. The main Summer market is extremely resilient, so much so that

▼ Europe

Groupways gets the big EXPO sell

THE countdown to EXPO 2000 has begun with the appointment of six UK tour operators and transportation companies as general sales agents. The world exposition is being held in Hannover, in Northern Germany, in the year 2000 and is expected to attract millions of visitors worldwide.

The six sales agents, including the Chesham-based wholesaler Groupways Leisure, will package tours to the exhibition and be involved in general ticket sales.

Gerry Topiol, md of Groupways, said: "We are very pleased to have been selected as tour sales agent for such a prestigious worldwide event.

"We have already taken registrations from operators for an event that has tremendous business potential. EXPO 2000 is expected to attract at least 20 million visitors and, because of undoubted overcapacity on the ferries and planes, coach operators should be very much in demand. Tremendous commercial activity will be generated by the event."

The other UK sales agents are DER, Travelscene, Moswyn Tours, German Travel Service and Scandinavian Seaways. A seventh may be appointed at a later date.

● **More details about EXPO 2000 will be announced from early next year.**

▼ UK

Getting the facts

A GROUP of 70 coach operators and their partners got the inside story on Manchester and its attractions on a weekend visit organised by the Coach Drivers Club of Great Britain.

The two-day visit incorporated a suppliers' workshop and visits to Jodrell Bank and Dunham Massey Park. The group also enjoyed a cruise on the Manchester Ship Canal and dinner at Harry Ramsden's fish and chip restaurant.

Marketing Manchester Visitor and Convention Bureau hosted the weekend and Diane Lomax, director of tourism, said: "The weekend provided a valuable opportunity to showcase the Manchester city region to the UK coach industry. We have had some very positive feedback from the delegates and early signs indicate an increase in bookings to many venues following the trip."

In the picture: operators visited Dunham Massey Park on a familiarisation tour of Manchester

Hotel break: members of the CTC party who visited Yorkshire and Derbyshire

● **A CTC familiarisation trip to Yorkshire and Derbyshire was hosted by Swallow Hotels.**

The party of 35 operators from around the UK visited Treak Cliff Tavern, Meadowhall, Chatsworth, Denby Pottery and the Royal Armouries. They also visited Swallow properties in Rotherham, Sheffield, South Normanton and Wakefield.

Caroline Burrows, travel trade sales manager, said: "For many of the operators, this was their first experience of Swallow Hotels and they were genuinely impressed with the high standards of service and accommodation and the range of leisure facilities were are able to offer."

liday wings

we have increased capacity for traditional week-away breaks.

"We also continue to see tremendous growth in shoulder season short breaks, a sector in which we have enjoyed significant expansion."

Lead-in prices for seaside holidays start at £161 for a five-day break in Ilfracombe. The price includes four nights half-board at Shearings' own Dilkhusa Grand Hotel, evening entertainment and two excursions.

The British programme is split into four regional brochures and Shearings is also operating a regional pricing strategy.

Shearings is also expanding its Irish portfolio for next year, following the success of its 1996 programme. Bookings for the company's Irish tours programme - including Northern Ireland - were up by a third, the highest increase in sales of any domestic product.

Capacity for 1997 is up by 10 per cent and Mr Barnes said: "Our entire Irish programme not only sold to capacity this year, but operated extremely well, with no problems recorded on any tour. Given that response, we feel justified in maintaining and increasing our commitment to the market."

Take three: (from left) sales supervisors Carolyn Jones, Roseanna Swift and Chris Earl mark the launch of the Shearings brochures

▼ UK

Cornish hotel latest acquisition

SHEARINGS Holidays has continued the expansion of its hotel chain by purchasing the Chy An Drea Hotel, in the Cornish resort of St Ives. The company has been granted planning permission to link the 33-bedroom property with the company's adjacent St Ives Bay Hotel to create one of the biggest hotels in the resort. This will have 82 rooms and be able to accommodate up to 160 holidaymakers.

More than £500,000 has been spent on refurbishing and improving the St Ives Bay in the past four years and Shearings plans to spend a further £250,000 on the Chy An Drea.

The hotel will operate a 38-week season from March to November, as well as Christmas and New Year, giving it an annual capacity of around 5,500 holidaymakers.

Vince Flower, Shearings' hotel operations director, said: "St Ives is our most popular Cornish resort, so this purchase is strategically important to us. It also shows we still have great faith in the traditional seaside holiday."

The Chy An Drea was sold by Don and Marilyn Boss, whose family has owned and managed the property since 1960. CBW

It's a deal: Don and Marilyn Boss seal the sale of the Chy An Drea Hotel with Vince Flower (right), Shearings' hotel operations director

Eurowatch

WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Amsterdam	13C/55F	Madrid	23C/73F
Athens	15C/59F	Oslo	9F/48F
Berlin	10C/50F	Paris	14C/57F
Brussels	16C/61F	Rome	18C/64F
Dublin	12C/54F	Stockholm	10C/50F
Lisbon	22C/72F	Vienna	9C/48F
Luxembourg	11C/52F	Zurich	9/48F

DIESEL PRICES

(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.56	Luxembourg	0.43
Belgium	0.56	Netherlands	0.55
Eire	0.54	Norway	0.72
France	0.52	Portugal	0.46
Germany	0.50	Spain	0.48
Greece	0.42	Sweden	0.65
Italy	0.61	Switzerland	0.64

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	16.54 Sch/£	Italy	2,387 Lire/£
Belgium	48.39 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.64 Gld/£
Denmark	9.05 K/£	Norway	10.0225 NKr/£
Eire	0.96 Punt/£	Portugal	238 Es/£
France	7.92 F/£	Spain	198 Pta/£
Germany	2.35 DM/£	Sweden	10.32 SKr/£
Greece	372 D/£	Switzerland	1.93 SFr/£

▼ Maintenance

Transcentral directors faced

But commissioner decides to suspend O-licence unti

by Michael Jewell

DIRECTORS of Salelink, which has had its O-licence suspended (*CBW*, 26 November) faced possible disqualification at a Birmingham disciplinary inquiry.

But West Midlands traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh decided to put the company off the road until all its vehicles have passed fresh MoT tests (*CBW*, 26 November).

The company, which trades as Transcentral, of Unit 45 Siddons Industrial Estate, Howard Street, West Bromwich, West Midlands, had as its directors Christopher Osbourne, Julie Osbourne and Anita Healey, but Christopher Osbourne said Anita Healey had resigned as a director.

However, the commissioner said that had not been notified to the Traffic Area. Mr Osbourne replied that her resignation had only been recent, some four weeks previously.

For the company, Michael Carless said the Osbourne family had previously been in business as Sandwell Travel. There had been no problems until recently, when a number of prohibition notices were issued to the company's vehicles.

Prior to the vehicle examiner's visit, the company had already realised it had to do something pretty drastic to tackle the maintenance problem. The company had been running 15 vehicles and that had been reduced to 12, with three licence discs being surrendered.

One of the big problems had been the age and types of vehicle and all the vehicles had been changed to MetroRiders. The company had taken out a contract with Carlyle Works for the vehicles to be inspected every three weeks. They had also arranged with the Featherstone Test Station for two vehicles a week to be MoT tested.

One of the problems had been that Christopher and Julie's father John Osbourne had too much influence and had not really followed the recommended maintenance system, said Mr Carless.

Christopher Osbourne had been preaching the recommended system for some time. The company had previously carried out its own maintenance, using it own facilities. They had lost one good mechanic and they had sacked the other two.

Each driver had now been given a triplicate book and a nil daily defect reporting system introduced. A new mechanic had been employed who simply dealt with defects as they arose.

Christopher Osbourne said the mix of type of vehicles had led to delays in obtaining spares. He had been driving a vehicle found to have a power steering fluid leak when it was examined at a school. He had earlier reported the leak to the mechanic, who had said it was not a problem and the fluid was just spilling over the top. He was very concerned when the vehicle was given a prohibition. The defective steering had been reported by himself and other drivers. He was told the fluid was coming out of the top and there was nothing the mechanics could do about it.

In reply to the commissioner, Mr Osbourne said the company operated regular services, private hire and school contracts. The company had not had any

MetroRiders were brought in by Transcentral be

▼ Maintenance

MC Travel coach steering fault

A STEERING defect found on an MC Travel coach was the worst he had ever come across in 25 years, the Bristol divisional enforcement manager said.

MC Travel Ltd, of Penta House, Avro Way, Bowerhill, Melksham, Wilts, was seeking the renewal of its 24-vehicle international licence. Kenneth Hopley, area manager of the VI's road transport enforcement division at Bristol, said one of the company's vehicles was given an immediate prohibition on 14 May for an insecure steering box.

One of the retaining bolts was missing and another was broken. One bolt had pulled through the chassis frame. Rust marks showed the steering box had been in that condition for some time. In his 25 years of experience, it was one of the worst defects he had ever come across. There was half a turn of play in the steering wheel. He just did not know how the vehicle could have been driven on the road. There could be no excuses.

Mr Hopley said a subsequent visit to the company's premises by a vehicle examiner revealed the vehicle concerned had last been inspected by the company's own staff on 2 May, 12 days before, and that the vehicle had covered about 1,200 miles in the intervening period.

A series of spot checks in July led to the issue of a further five prohibitions. When he looked at the test result history of the six vehicles concerned in the prohibitions, four had failed on first presentation with an average of 4.25 defects per vehicle. It all added up to a shoddy state of affairs, said Mr Hopley. There had been six prohibitions and an inability by the company to prepare vehicles sufficiently to get them through the test first time.

Questioned by Stephen MacGregor-Johnson, for the company, Mr Hopley said similar prohibitions had been issued in 1995 for steering defects, which he found alarming, and which involved a prosecution being brought against the company.

Mr MacGregor-Johnson said it was totally accepted the maintenance system had not been functioning properly in May. As a result the company had appointed a workshop manager. The drivers' defect reporting system had been considerably tightened, and a nil-defect reporting system introduced. One of the directors had now taken a more specific control over the systems. One fitter had been sacked for not doing his job properly.

Air Vice Marshal Ashford said there had been satisfactory maintenance reports in 1990 and 1994. There was an unsatisfactory report in November 1995, though the vehicle examiner did say the fleet was tidier than it was in the past. What concerned him was the prohibitions issued in 1994 and 1995 and two nasty convictions, with quite swingeing fines by the usual standards, for using defective vehicles.

Mr MacGregor-Johnson said the company was engaged on contract and service work and held a number of contracts with Wiltshire County Council. The first conviction at Chippenham in April 1995 arose from a spot check when play was found in the steering universal knuckle joint and the vehicle given a delayed prohibition. The company was then prosecuted for using the vehicle with defective steering.

Mr Hopley said the joint was excessively worn and the vehicle examiner reported it would have caused the steering to wander and, if the joint had locked up steering control, would have been lost completely. The prohibition was delayed

ban at public inquiry

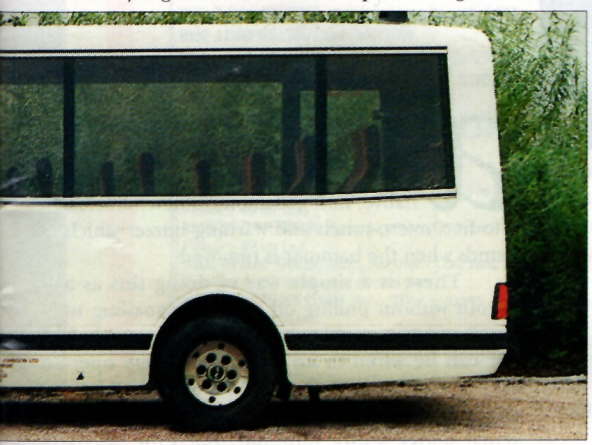
all 12 vehicles have fresh MoTs

complaints from the local education authority about the condition of their buses.

He was now fully in control of the business. His father was now just ferrying buses to Carlyle Works and Featherstone. He was not a mechanic himself and he had to rely upon others for advice.

Denying the company had ever run untaxed vehicles, Mr Osbourne said that, of the list of vehicles said not to be taxed, most had been sold and the others had their tax renewed. Fifteen vehicles were currently taxed, three of which were not in use and were for sale.

The commissioner said advice to have the vehicles put through fresh MoT tests prior to the public inquiry had not been taken but Mr Osbourne said six of the vehicles had only been in their possession for two weeks. He agreed he had been told at a New Operators' Seminar that, when second-hand vehicles were purchased, the purchase should be made subject to them having a fresh MoT test.



use of problems over age and type of vehicles

Mr Osbourne said he felt the company's problems dated back to purchasing vehicles of different types and the fact the mechanics' diagnosis of faults was incorrect.

The mechanics had kept telling them they had done the work and put the vehicles right. The drivers were very hot on their fault reporting. The system had been working up to the point of the diagnosis by the mechanic.

They had dismissed the mechanics when the situation became apparent as they felt they could no longer trust them. The six newest vehicles had all been inspected by Carlyle Works.

John Osbourne said the buses they had recently bought had come from Cardiff Bus, who had told them they could not get them in for test. Mr Pugh said Cardiff Bus had its own testing facilities.

Asking the commissioner not to suspend the licence, Mr Carless said the system was there. It was a firm with a lot of services, a lot of passengers and a lot of employees.

Suspending the licence, Mr Pugh said the company had not taken the advice given. His duty was clearly to the public to ensure the buses they travelled on were 100 per cent safe.

When the licence was granted in 1994, he had explained what was expected of the company. He accepted there had been faults with the mechanics but that was all the more reason why the company should have taken the advice to put its vehicles through fresh MoT tests. There had been a lax attitude as far as maintenance was concerned.

▼ **Maintenance**

Warning

SCOTTISH traffic commissioner Michael Betts warned Gleniffer Coaches over its maintenance standards. Allan Hill, trading as Gleniffer Coaches, of Paisley, of 1 Redhurst Crescent, Glenburn, Paisley, Renfrewshire, appeared at a Glasgow disciplinary inquiry. Mr Betts required within seven days an application form nominating Mr Hill as the firm's transport manager, copies of his Certificates of Professional Competence, a form specifying the vehicles currently in his possession and confirmation that the inspection and maintenance of his vehicles would now be carried out by his own staff.

was worst inspector had seen

to midnight to enable the vehicle to return to base.

The July 1995 conviction for the use of a dangerous vehicle led to a £500 fine, said the Air Vice Marshal. The prohibition referred to an insecure steering ball joint. Mr Hopley said the vehicle examiner had reported that, had the vehicle hit the kerb or a pothole, there would have been a total loss of steering control. He accepted the prohibition was not endorsed as showing a significant maintenance failure. Director Andy Charles-worth said they had taken the bull by the horns and hopefully solved the maintenance problem.

The driver of the vehicle prohibited in May had not reported any play in the steering and he had told the vehicle examiner he had not noticed any. The fitter who examined the vehicle on 2 May was the one who was later sacked. Director Graham Carter said they were guilty in that they had tended to always "chuck money" at a situation and they had first-class facilities. They had fallen down in that they had not followed it through and had a workshop manager to see that people were doing their jobs properly. They were upgrading the fleet, and had purchased four Ivecos, as they felt they had been operating an "overtime fleet."

Mr Carter said they tended as far as possible to keep the same driver on the same vehicle but Air Vice Marshal Ashford said the problem with having dedicated drivers to particular vehicles was that they could get used to and not notice a developing fault. Granting the licence with a warning, Air Vice Marshal Ashford said he accepted action had been taken; and that systems, procedures, facilities and staffing levels were adequate. But the company's record had been poor. Clearly things had to improve, or the company risked losing its licence. CBW

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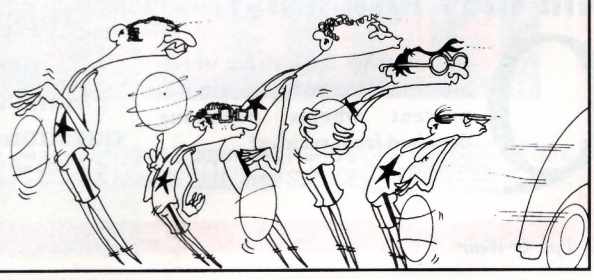
BUS TOP



Questions & Answers

Is there any defence?

Q **One of our drivers forgot to put in a tachograph disc. This was discovered on a spot check and both he and the company are being prosecuted. What defence, if any, can we put up?**

AA, E Sussex

A In relation to the driver there can be very little prospect of escaping conviction. We have, after all, had tachographs for some 15 years and it should be second nature by now to put a disc in when required. If there was some special reason (distraction, urgency etc) which caused him to forget it might just help if he can demonstrate he did not forget on the other 200 or so days in the past year - ie, by producing some sort of duty schedule for the past year and the discs to match it.

You have not told me the circumstances in which he was discovered without a disc. No offence would, of course, have been committed if the journey he was on fell within the exemptions contained in the EU Drivers' Hours Regulations (EC 3820/85), notably, but not exclusively, if he was on, or going to or from, a regular, or 'special regular', journey with a route length of less than 50 Km.

Turning to the company: while you may feel you should not be responsible for your driver's failure to comply with the rules, the plain fact is that in law you are so liable if the vehicle is 'used' in circumstances where a tachograph record should have been made. This is an 'absolute' offence - meaning you do not have to have known about the offence or consented to it to be convicted. You can, of course, ask the court to take into account mitigating circumstances. If you can produce evidence you had fully complied with the requirements of the EU tachograph regulations (EC 3821/85) this should assist your cause.

These duties are: to issue sufficient discs suitable for the equipment to be used, to advise drivers of what they have to do to comply with the hours rules and, most importantly, to make periodic checks to ensure the hours and record-keeping rules have been complied with and, if breaches are detected, taking appropriate steps to prevent their repetition. It may be a bit of a case of shutting stable doors if you have not been doing this. All employers should recognise the risks they face if they do not fulfil these duties. Not only is doing so an aid to defence; its aim is, of course, to prevent drivers dropping themselves and their employers in the mire.

Will they lock nuts?

Q **Do you think the lock-nut wheelnuts exhibited at Expocoach will prevent wheels becoming detached from vehicles?**

BD, Tyne & Wear

A For those who did not see them at Expocoach let me first explain that what you refer to is a sort of joined double nut that has interlocking cams on the adjacent faces of the top and bottom halves of the combined nut.

The effect of these cams is that, if the tension does come off one half of the nut, the movement against the cam actually causes the two halves to lock harder on to the threads - as if they were lock-nutted together.

It sounds fine in theory and I do believe that some fleet engineers are attracted to their use. The proof of the pudding will be in the eating. There is, of course, a down side. One factor is cost. At anything between £3 to £5 each, the cost of replacing all wheelnuts on a fleet is quite substantial. The second is that they are not available with the tapered nose still in use on many vehicles still in use (eg, Bedfords). For those interested in them, however, a call to 01795 844332 will bring information.

Lost wheels are a danger and an ever-present real risk. They are the sort of thing one thinks only happens to others, until...

With or without locknuts, good housekeeping should be practised. Make sure that mating surfaces on wheels and flanges are clean and free of rust when fitting wheels. Replace studs and nuts that have damaged or worn threads. Tighten to the correct torque setting and recheck after a short period of running.

Most of all ensure that wheelnuts are inspected frequently for tell-tale rust stains or even do a 'ministry' type of hammer-tapping check. If this sounds like a lot of bother (removing wheel trims, etc), conjecture that it is nothing to the bother there will be if a wheel comes off at speed on a motorway.

Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to: Marksman, c/o *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154 Marksman will answer more questions on 16 November 1996

Patience hammered

Q **I am sick and tired of replacing break-glass toffee hammers and being taken to task by vehicle examiners for the mis-deeds of thieving passengers. Can these hammers be secured in any way?**

WN, Essex

A I believe some universal rule on this may be in the offing. At present different examiners have different ideas on what is acceptable tethering of break-glass hammers. The other alternative, now common on new vehicles, is to fit a micro-switch and warning buzzer which sounds when the hammer is removed.

There is a simple way of doing this as a retrofit without pulling off miles of panelling to install wires: a micro-switch in the hammer holster can be wired to an adjacent, battery operated, smoke alarm — the sort of thing available at any DIY store for about £4. Just discard the actual smoke sensor unit and attach the micro-switch wires in its place. A battery will last a year or more and the alarm will blast out, in what will seem like mega-decibels in the confined space of a coach, if the hammer is removed.

...don't be caught out by Christmas

THE hour has gone back, the nights are drawing in and Christmas is a-coming. It is, therefore, timely to remind operators of registered services that notice of variation of registration needed to cater for changed demand during the weeks in which Christmas and the New Year fall has to be given to local authorities and the Traffic Commissioner 21 days before the variations are to take effect.

To all intents and purposes this is by the end of November. A quirk of the way in which the Registration Regulations are written means that, while the traffic commissioner does have powers in certain circumstances to reduce the normal 42-day period, no such power exists to reduce the special reduced period of 21 days that applies to services in the weeks when bank and public holidays occur.

Operators who fail to remember this could be looking for drivers to run services to normal timetable over Christmas! This could be difficult and expensive, to put it mildly. Don't get caught out by this, vary registrations as necessary in good time. CBW

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1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1995 M DAF SB3000 WS Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 55R
1994 L EOS 90 49R, toilet
1994 L DAF WS3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF KS3000 Easishift Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF SB3000 Int Retarder, Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1994 L DAF HS2700 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1994 L MB230LT Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF KS3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SM230LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF SB2305 Duple 340, 57R
1992 J DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1992 J DAF MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet

BUSES FROM OUR HIRE FLEET

1996 N DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
1995 M DAF SB220 Auto, Northern Counties Paladin, 49 str bus
1995 M DAF DB250 Auto, Northern Counties, Palatine III, 77 str double decker bus
1995 M DENNIS DART Auto, 10M, Plaxton Pointer, 40 str bus
1992 J DAF SB220 Auto, Ikarus Citibus, 48 str bus

1992 J DAF MB230 LT Van Hool Alizee 'H', 51R/Toilet
1991 H DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/Toilet
1990 G MB230LB Van Hool Alizee 'H'
1990 G DAF SB3000 Van Hool 'H', 49/Toilet
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 53R
1989 F DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee 'DH' 51R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51r/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500 , 52R
1989 F DAF MB 230LB Plaxton, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB2300 Duple 340SL, 53R
1988 E DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500, 51R/Toilet
1988 E DAF MB230LB Plaxton 3500, 53R

HIGH QUALITY USED COACHES

1995 M MERCEDES 709, Autobus Classique, 25 str, bus seats
1993 K MAN, Jonckheere Deauville, 51R/Toilet
1993 K DAF SB2700 HS, Caetano Algarve, 53R
1990 G VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1990 G DAF DHTD Duple 320, 57R
1989 G SCANIA K113 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 49R/Toilet
1989 F DAF MB230 Van Hool Alizee 'SH', 53R/Toilet
1989 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
1989 SB3000 Plaxton 3500, 51/Toilet
1988 VOLVO B10M, Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet
1988 PP BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49R/Toilet
1988 E DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee 'DH', 51R/Toilet
1988 E SB3000 Van Hool Alizee SH 49R/Toilet
1987 E DAF SB2300 Plaxton 3500, 53R, air conditioned .
1987 D DAF 2300 Van Hool Alizee 'H', 49R/Toilet
1987 D DAF SB 230LB Duple 340, 53R
1987 D VAN HOOL T815 51/toilet
1983 Y DAF MB Plaxton 3500, 49R/Toilet

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IS it a bird...is it a plane...no, it's...the Mometer.

Amazing but true. The Mometer is a new breed of superhero who is warning that Britain's roads could be overrun by broken-down coaches, buses and trucks this Winter if operators don't take extra care.

Zap! Bang! Pow! Kapow! Boom! Wham! Shell Oils aims to hit operators between the eyes with warnings of the perils of using the wrong type of liquid in a cooling system.

You'd imagine that professional fleet engineers don't need to be told about the wisdom of protecting engines from damage. Apparently not, if the experience of mild-mannered driver Sonny Winters is anything to go by.

According to Shell, his vehicle overheated on the M1 and he became Mometer — a likely story...

Is ad Fitt for a bus?

"PULL something a bit tasty this weekend" proclaims the advertising poster on the rear of this Kentish Bus decker. No, it is not what many people may think but caravan firm Fitt trying to attract attention to its products.

Amusing to some, maybe, but is this the sort of slogan that should appear on a public service vehicle?

As an aside, this Volvo Citybus was supplied new to the London fleet of the ill-fated, though colourful Maidstone Boro'line.

Originally used on LT route 188 into central London with dedicated route details on the side panels, the whole batch of Volvos was subsequently reallocated to outer suburban work.

Now the London operation of Boro'line was noted for its inability to display consistent route numbers, with all manner of conflicting numerals on buses causing much amusement — and considerable annoyance.

With side and rear displays seemingly left to their own devices, the classic example recorded was, indeed, route 422, when only the front of the bus was correct. With 188 details still on the sides, the offending bus offered four route options.

Ah, those where the days.

CBW

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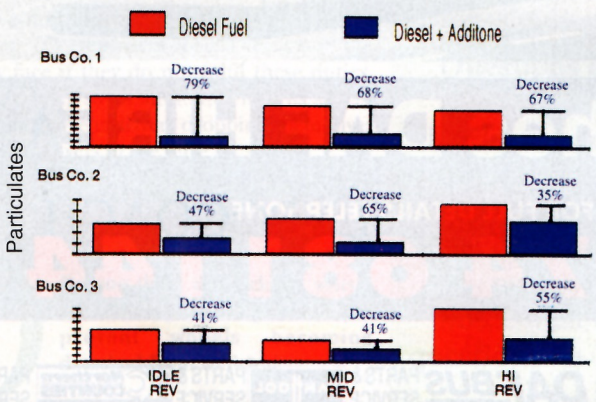

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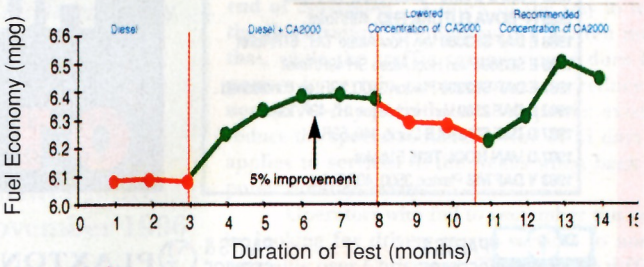

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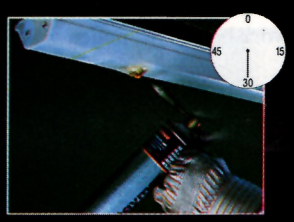

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

We have had so many letters this week that we have had to keep a substantial number for the next issue, including some on the low-floor debate. But please keep on writing — ed

Saddened to think all the trust has been lost

From Ian Haddon

I have been following the ongoing debate concerning the VI and I totally endorse Marksman's article.

However, it saddened me to think that all the trust that had been built up over many years, and which was not gained lightly, has now seemingly been lost.

When I think of the number of times I called the VI for advice and got it, and they were always helpful and pleasant, I can honestly say that, in the 25 years I ran R&I Coaches, I never once had cause to complain. They were always co-operative not confrontational, firm but fair.

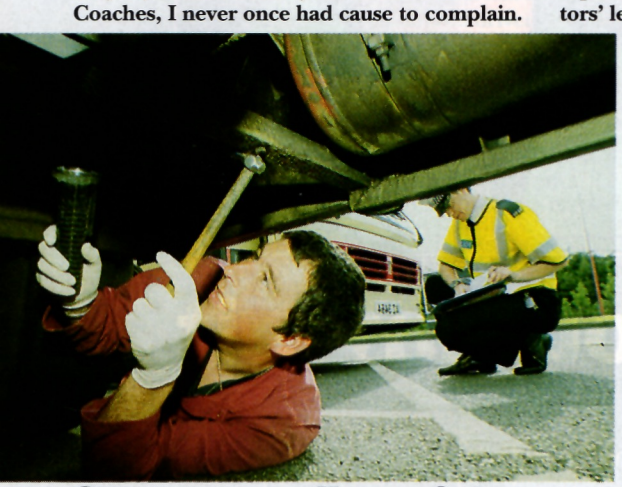
From Marksman's description it would appear that the inspectors are now on performance-related pay.

As someone said to me the other day: "They can bury their mistakes, but they will bury you for yours."

So what about lots of exhumations? For every incident, no matter how small, write a letter with a query, complaint, or request for explanation. The letters will require replies, internal inquiries, meetings, solicitors' letters, attendance at hearings, ombudsmen, minister of transport and, finally, a question in the House.

It could get to the stage when there won't be time for the inspectors to get out on the road and we could see a dip in the nitpickers' statistics.

Ian A Haddon
Consultant to the coach and bus industry
Waltham St Lawrence
Berks



System totally unfair

From Anon

I found Marksman's column very interesting regarding the issue of PG9s by the Vehicle Inspectorate (*CBW*, 12 October).

I think Marksman would find the following tale more interesting than the cases he quoted.

We recently had a Plaxton Supreme-bodied vehicle inspected by a police officer. Despite a clearly-displayed notice affixed to the rear emergency door which proclaimed "Emergency Exit — lift handle and push door to open", the constable insisted that, when the handle was lifted, the door should automatically open. Because the door did not follow his wishes he issued a PG9 stating that the emergency door catch was defective. Our driver showed the constable how to operate the door correctly but he was not interested.

My reaction was to contact Hampshire Constabulary about my dissatisfaction and I managed to eventually speak with the officer who issued the PG9. His reaction was that, if the traffic commissioner was to take action against our licence, he would gladly give evidence in our defence stating that the door operation was all right. The vehicle in question was steam cleaned and submitted for a full test and PG9 removal without remedial work being done — result, pass!

The following day we had another constable check one of our double-deck Bristol VR buses while operating a stage service. The officer in question pushed the seat cushions from underneath which, of course, ejected the cushions from the frame. The constable issued a PG9 stating that all seats were loose and dangerous.

My reaction was to contact The Vehicle Inspectorate at our local testing station for some guidance. The vehicle examiner to whom I spoke was more than helpful. He invited me to bring the bus to the testing station for him to inspect. The vehicle examiner could find nothing wrong with the seats.

I then asked for the most senior vehicle examiner on the site to inspect the seats without mentioning the PG9. He could find nothing amiss! The vehicle examiner then issued a delayed prohibition, we booked a clearance test, steam-cleaned the bus and submitted it for clearance. The result was a pass — once again no work whatsoever was done on the vehicle.

The Vehicle Inspectorate is supporting my complaint to Hampshire Constabulary and is willing to support a further claim against it for the unnecessary expenses we incurred paying out for steam cleaning and test fees.

While I am willing to support the police in their duties, I do not support the idea of police officers who have been on a one-day course being allowed to do the work of a vehicle examiner who has spent many years learning his trade. A police officer when doing the job of a vehicle examiner can only issue a PG9 requiring a full retest, while a vehicle examiner can issue a delayed prohibition or a defect notice. The system that allows this is totally unfair.

Hampshire operator
Name and address supplied

Destroying confidence

From anon

Like every coach operator, we have had vehicles stopped in VI spot checks and, through your magazine, I would like to ask the VI three questions.

In the first check our vehicle was operating a swimming baths contract for the local education department. As the drivers have only 15 minutes between each load, by the time the vehicle was escorted into the check area and a police officer had spoken to the driver, he was already late for his next load. The driver contacted the office and we sent another vehicle. By that time it was too late

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Automotive Ltd
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
fax: 01733 467154
e-mail: FrankF@automotive.emap.co.uk

Keep those letters rolling in. If requested, we will publish them anonymously, but always include your full name (ie first name and surname), address and telephone number

CORGI CLASSICS

Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

for their swimming session. Not only did we lose the revenue off the vehicle, we had to reimburse the school for the baths session.

We had a second vehicle going to collect a group catching a charter flight (£150 per head x 40 = £6,000 for flight). Again it was caught in a spot check, and again we had to send a second vehicle. But what if a vehicle had not been available, and they had missed their flight, and had demanded the cost of the flight off the operator?

So my three questions are:
1) Is the VI going to reimburse the operators when revenue is lost and compensation paid because it has detained the vehicle?
2) How much does the police presence cost, and is it met by the taxpayer?
3) Why can't the VI be based at test stations? If the stations had a list of the PCV vehicles in their area, they could call operators at short notice and have the vehicles brought in for a proper inspection and, if no faults were found on payment of a test fee, the vehicle could be issued with a new test, so helping to fund the VI.

The actions of the VI against coach operators are destroying the public's confidence in public transport and the fine relationship this industry had with the Department of Transport.

Why are we doing it?

Anon

What's going on?

From Lawrence Hailstone

I am writing this letter to complain about the ministry giving prohibition notices for nothing. One of my drivers dropped a party of children on a contract and was about to pull away from the layby when a ministry man, not a police officer, knocked on his window and told him to go round the corner to a garage to be checked over. No identification was shown. They checked the emissions and lights then, while the police officer was talking to the driver, the ministry man asked for the emergency back door key. He came back after checking inside and outside and told the driver he could not unlock the emergency back door. He issued a prohibition notice (at 8.20am) on it stating this and that the door was "deliberately secured"?

On the driver returning to the office, a matter of 35 minutes, my wife went out and checked the doors and opened them up with no problems, inside, outside, locked and unlocked. She and I knew there was no problem as this vehicle had new seats put in the night before by myself, and the emergency door was opened during this time. She telephoned the police station at 9.20am to complain but was just told to contact the testing station.

Due to quickness of Chelmsford Testing Station, who were helpful enough to book my vehicle in for a full MoT (which was on the prohibition), it passed at 2pm the same day.

Since this happened on 17 October, I have spoken to numerous operators about this and have found that some are experiencing the same predicament. Fair enough, have these spot checks, which I believe to be necessary, but be sincere. The ministry man never even showed the driver, who was rather nervous at being pulled over, that he could not open this door: why not?

When I asked the driver if he had gone with the ministry man to check the door he said no, he had been kept talking to the police officer and was flustered.

There is no way that I would operate a vehicle with the emergency door not working properly, or in an unworthy condition. What is going on, a competition? This would be laughable if not so serious. Let's hear from any other operators who have experienced the same type of problems.

Lawrence Hailstone
Basildon
Essex

Where will it all end?

From Anon

I am interested in your comments about the VI trying to meet its target figures for 1996. We have fallen foul of them, that is why I write to you on ordinary paper instead of headed notepaper, and bearing in mind not to publish the name and address.

We own a German coach just over five years old. This vehicle is fitted with a courier seat which folds up into the dashboard, unlike the Plaxton one fitted to the right of the step which automatically rises when not sat upon.

When we take the vehicle for its MoT we have to take this seat out. One VI depot takes the coach off the road if it is fitted, saying it's illegal, another VI depot says it is legal.

Another problem is that, on a window refitted after resealing double glazing, a new rubber covered the Kite Mark.

This was not passed until the Kite Mark was showing — where will it end? Let's have good, trained commercial garages taking over the VI duties.

Name and address supplied

Kinch in glass house?

From Paul Cresswell

I was interested in your article on Gilbert Kinch (*CBW*, 19 October) and would be the first to congratulate Gilbert, Janet and Wayne on the business that has been built over the last 10 years and wish them ongoing success. I would, however, just point out that perhaps there has been some slight selective memory loss on Gilbert's part when he remarks that, and I quote: "What upsets me is when one independent attacks another in the same town."

My colleagues and I recall that, as the only independent operating in the Loughborough area, before deregulation and in the heady days afterwards, we were suddenly faced with bright blue and yellow double deckers running a few minutes before our regular services and at considerably lower fares! Should we perhaps mention the old adage about stones and glass houses?

Paul Cresswell
Director
County Travel
Ratby
Leics

Slight selective memory loss on Gilbert's part?

System reliable but...

From Geoff Stephenson

Congratulations to London Transport for deciding to extend the 'Countdown' information system across the capital.

As a regular user of buses on the Uxbridge Road, I have found the system is generally reliable and extremely useful, especially where there are alternative routes. If the second choice bus arrives at the stop first it's valuable to know how much longer one will have to wait for the preferred service.

It's sometimes disconcerting when a bus which had been displayed as due in the next five minutes or so suddenly drops off the display altogether, only to appear on the display — or arrive at the stop — several minutes later. I presume that this is a short-term, teething problem and is being dealt with as the system is developed.

The biggest problem at the moment, however , is at the start of the route. Buses don't appear on the system until they are actually on the departure stand, so the displays at Uxbridge Station and in Uxbridge High Street are blank most of the time. Is the system not capable of accepting an anticipated departure?

Are the controllers too busy or too lazy to enter a bus on to the system? Or is it that CentreWest does not know when a bus is due to depart until it actually emerges from Uxbridge Garage?

Geoff Stephenson
Harefield
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Travel West Midlands Metrobuses queue up at Marshall Bus in Cambridge for the full treatment — a complete rebuild

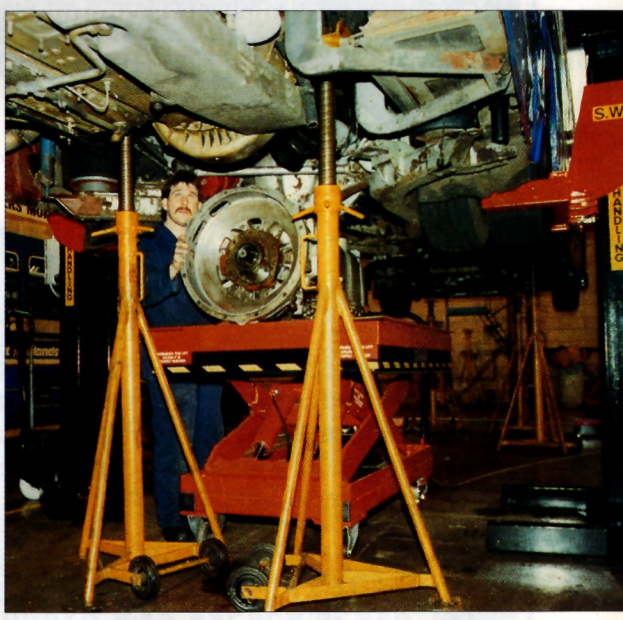
Refurbishment — is it the way forward?

New vehicles, or time for a revamp inside and out? Alan Millar looks at the permutations

REFURBISHMENT is the coach and bus industry's equivalent of a 'fashion' item. One day, it's 'in'. The next, it's old hat and apparently makes no economic sense.

Reality probably lies somewhere in the middle, and financial rather than emotional decisions play a bigger part than they do in the consumer clothing world. When funding is scarce or new vehicle prices are rising faster than inflation, it may well make sense to defer replacement by modernising vehicle interiors, removing the sources of advancing corrosion, smartening up the exterior and replacing worn-out electrical parts. There also are tax advantages as all the costs of even an extremely comprehensive refurbishment can be offset against a single year's Corporation Tax liability, whereas a new vehicle must be depreciated on a 25 per cent reducing balance. Of course, it all adds up to the same amount of depreciation over the life of each vehicle, but there can be short-term advantages.

On the other hand, however much a coach or bus is refurbished, it isn't a new vehicle. If it's a seventies or eighties bus, it's almost certainly still going to use heavier major units than one of the latest models for the nineties and, conse- ▶▶▶



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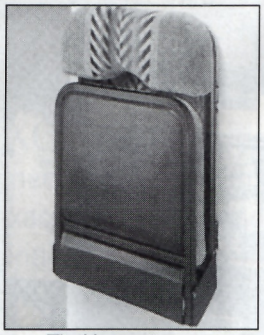

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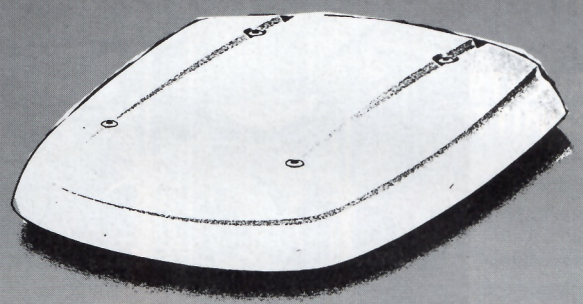

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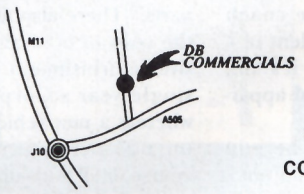

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...refurbishment answer?

...and now to work on the interior

quently, its fuel consumption will remain higher – even if it's markedly better than before it's been refurbished.

It won't very likely be possible to meet all of the 1997 DPTAC requirements and, unquestionably, conversion to low-floor is impossible.

With buses which, because of their generally longer lives and higher mileages than coaches, are more likely to be treated to major refurbishment, there are sometimes special circumstances that swing the argument against replacement.

London Buses' pre-privatisation upgrade of its Routemasters was a classic example as the ideal solution of a new rear platform bus was – and possibly still is – too costly to contemplate. New front-entrance buses might not have the same passenger appeal, but the structurally intact Routemasters' interiors were old fashioned and riddled with unreliably worn-out electrics and inadequate heaters.

Travel West Midlands has similarly unusual reasons for refurbishing its 1,100 MCW Metrobus double-deckers. Marshall Bus has already conducted a highly focused production line rebuilding process on over 300 of these vehicles which were built between 1978 and 1989. It's designed to add 10 years to their lives, although TWM is likely to start phasing them out of its fleet in about five years from now.

Significantly, TWM describes the job as re-engineering rather than refurbishment. It was as much a way of consistently correcting faults (particularly corrosion) caused by poor manufacturing techniques and involves the replacement of a combination of chassis and body parts, particularly around the rear of the lower deck, which is helping many of the buses perform better now than when they were new.

The decision to refurbish was also driven by sheer arithmetic. With other more pressing candidates for replacement in its fleet, £30 million spent on focused re-engineering is far more acceptable than shelling out £132 million on 1,100 brand new double deckers.

Similar thoughts initially swayed the mood at British Bus in favour of refurbishing Leyland Nationals until the price advantage over a new Dennis Dart narrowed to the point where senior management could no longer justify expensive rebuilding of 18-year-old buses.

With coaches, the arguments are different. Often, it's more a question of how well a vehicle compares with the fashionable new products coming off today's production lines, although corrosion cannot be ignored. It's also worth considering if it's worth investing in more durable flooring if a coach that began life under the gentle footprints of middle aged and older tour and hire customers is going to be spending its later years on school contracts or tendered bus routes.

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FLEETMASTER

FLEETMASTER Bus & Coach is taking up where British Bus left off, by developing an improved version of the Urban Bus rebuild programme for Leyland Nationals.

This is the successor to the National Greenway developed in the early nineties and produced by East Lancs when it was British Bus's captive in-house bodybuilding subsidiary.

Even re-upholstering can boost image

The Urban Bus is a substantially cheaper solution first built a couple of years ago by London & Country, using a Cummins B-Series engine and an Allison MT643 gearbox. It may be a gross over-simplification, but the end result was mechanically much closer to the market-leading Dennis Dart. Even before the Cowie Group took over and severed the last links with East Lancs, British Bus had swung back to the new bus solution and Urban Bus was quietly abandoned.

But Steve Swain of Fleetmaster sees continuing potential for the Urban Bus and, indeed, had already approached British Bus with an offer to sell and market the vehicle to operators outside the group. Encouraged by Mitchell Diesels, Allison's UK distributor, it has decided to go it alone and a prototype Mark Two version of the Urban Bus is currently being prepared ready for launch at *Coach & Bus Live* at Donington next April.

"We've bought a V-registered Mark 1 National from Eastern National," says Mr Swain. "The first one will have lots of extras to show people what is possible. It will have a different front end, skirt panels and headlights, new doors and lower step, Tarabus flooring, DPTAC handrail systems, new heating lighting, electrics and windows." Allison's new MT645 gearbox will be used. He says there already have been expressions of interest from some of the larger groups which see a medium term continuing requirement for their remaining fleets of Nationals.

The plan is to offer a range of options, scaling down from a full scale rebuild with every feature on offer down to simple re-engining. When it was an in-house product of London & Country's engineering department, full Urban Bus rebuilds were reckoned to cost a shade under £30,000 each. Fleetmaster is still working out the commercial rebuilding costs, but expects to announce prices when the bus is launched next April.

✆ Tel 01403 276222

KENT COACHWORKS

AT Kent Coachworks – part of the Pullmans Group that also owns London Coaches and North Kent Express – Martin Page says the adoption of two-pack paint is improving the durability of new and refurbished coaches and buses.

The Northfleet workshop recently applied Harris Bus's new green and blue livery and has been repainting vehicles for Cowie fleets around London. "Two-pack paint is harder wearing, sheds dirt more readily and offers greater protection of the bodywork," says Mr Page.

"It retains the shine and gloss longer. I'm reluctant to say you would get 50 per cent more life out of a repaint but it will certainly remain looking good for longer.

"Bus operators usually work on repainting after four

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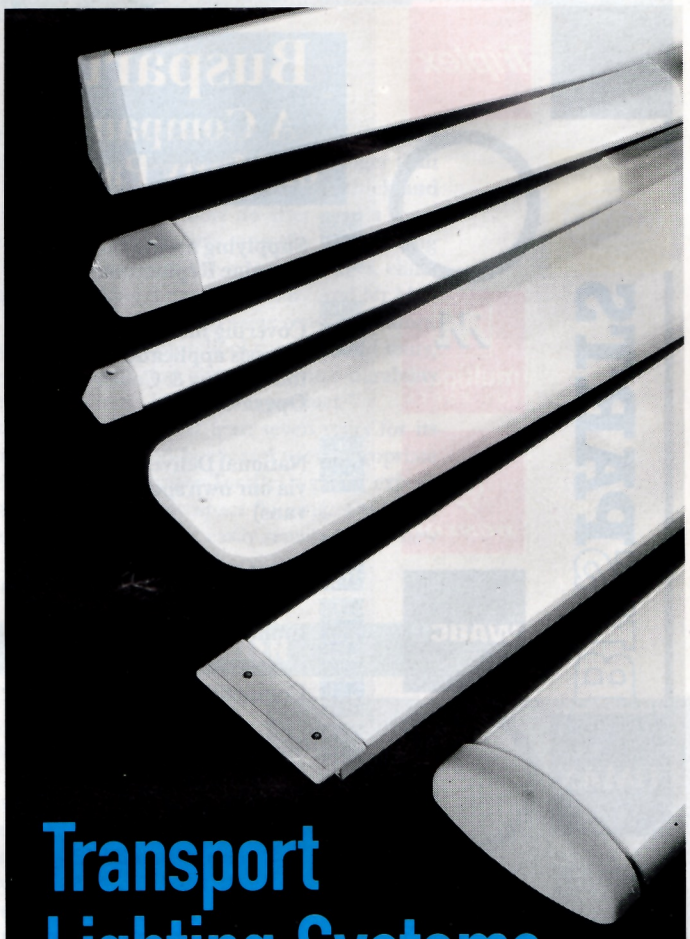

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years and by the fourth year their vehicles are getting to look quite dull, especially if they've been through abrasive washing machines."

For more general refurbishment, Kent Coachworks suggests operators have stretch panels replaced on older coaches – indeed, not-so-old vehicles, too, as it gets a fair number of five-year-old and older Plaxton Paramounts in with early signs of corrosion caused by inadequate protection when they were new. "Usually, corrosion is apparent," he says. "Once we remove the panels on some coaches, we can find corrosion on the structure which, in turn, leads to body movement."

He says that coach refurbishment can also have important image-boosting benefits for smaller operators. "By replacing the stretch panels, relaying worn-out flooring and applying a new livery, they can elevate a coach above school contract level and give it a broader appeal."

✆ Tel 01474 327720

BLACKPOOL COACH SERVICES

DUPLE may have been out of the coach market for seven years but its skills are alive and well at Blackpool Coach Services where ex-Duple men Eddie Smith and Neale Daniels run a four-man coach refurbishment and repair business for a client base that stretches from Essex and South Wales to the Outer Hebrides. "We even, occasionally, get work from operators in Lancashire," quips Mr Smith.

It specialises in replacing exterior panels and bases its keen pricing on its throughput. "I give the customers the benefit of my 30 years' experience by turning coaches round exceedingly fast," he says. "And if I say we're going to do a job in two weeks, we know it's got to be done by then. Even if an operator isn't going to have a job for the coach on the Friday night they pick it up from us, the chances are that he will for the Saturday morning."

He says a simple exterior refurbishment of, say, a Plaxton Paramount will cost between £2,000 and £3,000, about £500 extra if mouldings are changed to update the styling or nearer £1,000 extra for new hinges or flaps.

Typical vehicles though the workshops are 1982-88 vehicles which, because of their age, will have suffered from bumps and scrapes and be in need of replacement stress panels. Corrosion varies between makes, generally being less prevalent on Van Hools than on older Jonckheeres and Plaxtons, but structural weaknesses are rare.

Blackpool Coach Services refastens panels by what Mr Smith calls the Duple method. "It was a different method from the one Plaxton used at the time. Plaxton used to spot weld, whereas Duple stuck it on with modern adhesive. That secured it and sealed it to the framework. There was no water leak and no rust that way," he says.

✆ Tel 01253 698686

MARTYN INDUSTRIALS-TARABUS

THE coach and bus markets are like chalk and cheese when considering replacing flooring materials, says Jim Martyn, partner in Martyn Industrials, the British distributor of the increasingly popular French-made Tarabus product range.

"Buses are about short hauls of steady numbers of people, while coaches take groups for, say, two hours, drop them off, take them on again and go back. They've not got the same throughput of people. If you look in a 10-year-old coach, you will see a lot of the original product is still in place and is hardly touched, whereas a city bus takes brickbats and hard wear."

But there can be reasons other than wear and tear for replacing coach flooring. Tarabus has developed a new range of coach floorings with three designs to complement the latest fashion styles of interior trim produced by John Holdsworth's. Tarabus products all have joints hot air welded to provide waterproofing and, because they are colourfast, anti-bacterial and anti-fungal,will last longer than latex-backed rubber floors. They also are less thick and won't ripple like many rubber floors do after even a short period in use. The harder-wearing, non-slip bus flooring materials are best installed up to the seat track edges, eliminating dirt traps and making it easier to clean. And Mr Martyn says these products may appeal to some coach operators. "For an operator using a fleet on school contracts and tours, we have a flooring product that gives city centre durability but in a design that still looks like a coach product."

Tarabus aims at a life of at least seven years for its flooring systems in coaches and buses and uses appropriate lessons learned from manufacturer Taraflex's global experience in industrial, leisure and aerospace flooring. On buses, Jim Martyn says it's designed to be easily repaired to as new condition if a vehicle is involved in an accident.

✆ Tel 01933 651651

C&I TREADMASTER

TREADMASTER continues to offer traditional cork and rubber composition floors. Its long-established TM4 material was used in London's big Routemaster refurbishment programme and is still being used for more recent upgrades of buses that missed out on the main exercise. This year, it introduced the brighter-coloured TM6 which is about eight per cent cheaper to produce than the older flooring. It has been particularly successful in the Hong Kong market, but has been tried out in seed vehicles in British fleets.

Treadmaster also offers TM7, a low smoke emission flooring designed primarily for the rail market.

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Tarabus harder-wearing bus flooring

DELTA (AG)

INTERIOR refurbishment need not involve new fittings. Sometimes it's simply a question of removing the effects of graffiti, chewing gum and other unpleasant results of transporting large numbers of irresponsible adolescents and young adults. Rather than repanel or reupholster a vehicle, Delta (AG) offers the lower-cost solution of a range of liquid removers which are approved by many of the leading seating, upholstery, lighting and flooring companies supplying the British market. Customers include First-Bus, Go-Ahead and Cowie Group.

Its latest product, Delta Graffiti Gard, protects hard surfaces as well as removing defacements. It points out that, not only are the materials supplied in environmentally-sound non-aerosol dispensers, but they also are approved by anti-animal vivisection campaign group BUAV as they have not been tested on animals.

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ABACUS has developed a lightweight M2-tested seat which could appeal to operators looking to upgrade their wheelchair-accessible mini/midibuses to meet the latest safety expectations. The company says it's 22 to 24 per cent lighter than comparable products and that it will be priced competitively.

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CBW

CAETANO

Toyota Tops for Travel

A NEW Toyota Optimo III has been collected by Steventon Transport of Basingstoke from Salvador Caetano UK of Heather.

Steventon trades as Top Travel and is run by owner David Tighe. His son Matthew, who is private hire manager, collected the coach from Caetano sales executive, Tony Walton, because the Optimo is aimed at private-hire clients in a business which evolved from provider of school minibus transport over 10 years ago.

Out of Top Travel's 20-vehicle fleet, 10 have tail-lifts and all are based on Mercedes-Benz chassis-cowl — except for the Optimo and a 36-seat Caetano-bodied 35-seat MAN.

The new coach is Top Travel's third Optimo, with the company operating a three-year replacement programme. It is a 21-seater with the usual Optimo refinements: power door; tinted glazing; full-draw curtains; Blaupunkt stereo; full soft trim; and centre gangway carpet.

OPTARE

Excels clinch it for Kinch

Low-floors free up standard Darts for Loughborough town services run by Kinchbus

by Mike Morgan

TWO stylish Optare Excel low-floor buses have freed up standard Dennis Darts for Loughborough town services run by Kinchbus (*CBW*, 19 October).

The Excels serve the company's Loughborough to Leicester service 126 and they increase the number of low-floor buses in the Kinchbus fleet to seven — five Pointer/Dart SLFs having already been delivered.

Low-floor buses form part of the Kinchbus strategy to woo passengers with quality bus services, meeting need with some imagination and a 50p flat fare.

Company boss Gilbert Kinch is convinced that people will pay for quality (*CBW*, 19 October).

He said he plans to have all full-sized buses low-floor by the end of August 1997.

Other innovations in the Kinch masterplan include 10-journey magnetic swipe cards at a discounted rate; a pilot campus service at Loughborough University; and it has joined a Quality Partnership with Midland Fox and the borough and county councils. Bus priorities in Loughborough could be on the cards.

JONCKHEERE AND EAST LANCS

Derby team gets last of the Deauvilles

DUNN-LINE of Nottingham has bought a new Jonckheere-bodied coach from Yeates of Loughborough for the Derby County team contract it now operates.

Md Bob Dunn said the Volvo B10M-chassied coach (right) carries the last Deauville to be built at the Jonckheere factory in Belgium before the new Mistral range went into full production for the UK.

He said: "This vehicle is fitted with 33 seats, all with tables, and it is equipped with many extras which include cooking facilities."

This coach, and three new low-floor buses for a park-and-ride contract, go into the Dunn-Line fleet of over 70 large coaches and buses and 100 taxies

● All three Nottingham Park and Ride contracts are now operated by new vehicles. Nottingham City Transport runs the service from the Forest Site. Trent subsidiary, Barton, has three Optare Excels (*CBW*, 12 October) for the Queens Drive scheme and, having won the five-year contract from the Racecourse, Dunn-Line has three East Lancs-bodied Dennis Dart SLFs for the service (left).

Finished in eye-catching livery, the Dunn-Line SLFs carry East Lancs' 44-seat Spryte body.

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PLAXTON

Stagecoach artics now running

by Mike Morgan

TEN Plaxton-bodied Volvo B10M artics delivered to Stagecoach are being used on selected routes in north-west England and in Scotland where continuing increase in passenger numbers has justified investment in high-capacity coaches. They join two Jonckheere Mistral-bodied examples used by Fife Scottish (*CBW*, 6 July).

Hailed as the first articulated coaches to be built in Britain, the 71-seat Plaxton vehicles are a development of the best-selling Plaxton Premiere body. Although 18 metres long, a short — 5.6-metre — wheelbase gives a turning circle comparable with a conventional 12-metre rigid coach.

The Volvo B10M chassis is powered by a 286 bhp engine driving through a ZF automatic gearbox.

They feature seatbelts on every seat. An emergency door is provided in the trailer section (inset) and is surveyed by a video camera with a monitor for the driver.

Stagecoach director, Barry Hinkley, said: "We have over the last three years introduced new Plaxton Interurban coaches on new services in many different parts of the country and there is no question that this investment is paying dividends. Our customers recognise the comfort and convenience we offer and appreciate our highly competitive fares.

"We believe that the introduction of articulated coaches will be a cost-effective way of increasing capacity on the busiest of these services while still maintaining high service quality. We will be closely monitoring the performance of these new coaches over the coming months to determine just what role they have to play in our operations in the future."

WRIGHTS

New name on first 50 of 300 low-floors

TRAVEL West Midlands, part of the National Express Group, has unveiled its bold new identity on the first of over 300 Wright low-floor buses which are being put into service in one of this country's biggest commitments to accessible buses.

Fifty 37-seat Wright Crusader 'super-midis' on 10.6-metre Volvo B6LE chassis are the first in the new look which will go on to all of Travel West Midlands' low-floor buses, setting them apart from the rest of the fleet.

Features include wide, step-free entrances and accommodation for wheelchairs, baby buggies and shopping trolleys.

David Leeder, Travel West Midlands' marketing director, said: "The first Wright Crusaders have replaced small midis and large single-deckers on four short routes radiating from West Bromwich.

"We selected the routes which already have strong flows of shoppers and older people as these groups benefit most from low-floor buses. Each of the four routes also feeds into one or more of the sites of stations on the fully-accessible Midland Metro which is scheduled to open in 1998.

"When we are making that sort of enhancement to our services, it is important we make people aware of the nature of the product we are providing. Just as retailers package their products to describe what's in the box, we have packaged our Wright Crusaders to help potential customers understand what is inside by making them clearly recognisable on the road."

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1976 YLQ BEDFORD 500 Dominant 1, 41 seats, air door, MoT August, 1997, seats are in excellent condition, body perfect, one previous owner, genuine reason for sale. This little coach is very very clean and must be seen, **Stan's Coaches, 01621 891959. (Moulden, Essex).** 65967/BE

1979 (T) BEDFORD PLAXTON SUPREME IV, 500 YMT, tinted windows, curtains, tidy condition, tested May, 1997, **£4,250 + VAT. Tel 0114 231 3165.** 65725/BE

1978 BEDFORD YMT PLAXTON SUPREME. Suitable for spares or repair, runs. **£1750 ono + VAT. Tel: 0121 550 2471** 65878/BE

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BOVA FUTURA FHD
1990
51 recliners + courier, toilet, drivers bunk, fridge, hot drinks, double glazed, white with grey interior, excellent condition, full MoT.
£72,500 + VAT ono
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65963/BO

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1985 DAF SB2300 PLAXTON 3500 with 53 reclining seats, Continental door, Blaupunkt radio/PA curtains, aircraft lockers, well maintained, long MoT. **£33,000 + VAT**

1984 DAF BOVA FUTURA, 49 seats with toilet and coffee machine (extra seats available), radio/PA, MoT April, 1997. **£25,000 + VAT**

1985 DAF BOVA EUROPA, 47/53 seats with demountable toilet unit, radio/PA, only ever used on tours + private hire, good condition, MoT January. **£18,500 + VAT**

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72-seat double decker, DAF SBR 3000. Running gear, seat belts, video, fridge, Webasto etc.
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BRISTOL

BRISTOL LTL. 39 seats, EC body, 1976, MoT Nov '97, £3,995 + VAT ONO. **Tel: 01495 212288 (Gwent).** 65646/BR

DOUBLE DECKER

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1 – 8.5 metre, 35-seater, 1979 PP
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Both full year's MoT, plain white, both 360 Turbo
Marshall 45-seater service bus, Ford 380 engine, manual gearbox, long test, ready for work, 1985 (B),
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1981 LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME, 53 remoquetted seats, 6 speed ZF gearbox, will be resprayed all white, 11 months' MoT, **£9,000 plus VAT. Tel 01290 550365.** 64601/LE

1978 LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME EXPRESS, 53 bus seats, 1 year's MoT, **£4,500 + VAT. Telephone West of Scotland 01290 550365.** 64602/LE

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611/711 CONVERSIONS, 24 seats, power door, large boot, available now with 611 wheelchair/24 coach seats of six wheel chairs plus 412 Sprinter, 16 seats, also 16 wheelchairs all in stock now. **Tel Blythswood 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107, evenings.** 65979/ME

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1991 (J) Iveco 49.10 "New Generation" Carlyle Mark III 23/25 seat bus, manual gearbox, power steering, power door, Diptac handrails and bell pushes, luggage pen, new MoT, in excellent condition throughout, just one left, £13,995.

1991 (H) Iveco 49.10 "New Generation" Phoenix Mark II 23/25 seat buses, manual gearboxes, power steering, Diptac handrails and bell pushes, luggage pens, new MoT's, in excellent condition throughout, three available, £12,495 each.

1990 (G) Iveco 49.10 Turbodaily Carlyle Mark II 23/25 seat bus, manual gearbox, power steering, power doors, Diptac handrails and bell pushes, wide entrance door, new MoT, excellent condition, one only left at just £7,995.

1989 (G) Freight Rover Carlyle Mark II 20-seat buses, power door, tan interiors, new MoT's, 5-speed manual, excellent value at just £5,495 each.

1989 (G) Volkswagen Transporter with Devon 8/11 seat conversion. Recent new turbodiesel engine, five-speed gearbox, grey interior, twin side loading doors, radio/cassette, metallic blue interior, MoT 3/97, very clean little coach, one only at just £4,295.

1989 (F) Ford Transit DI diesel 14-seat minibus, factory conversion with 5-speed gearbox, cloth trimmed seatbelts, radio/cassette and side loading door, new MoT, £4,995.

1988 (F) Iveco 49/10 Carlyle Mark II 23/25 seat buses, wide entrances, power doors, automatic gearboxes, luggage pens, some with Diptac features, new MoT's, excellent condition, choice of four very clean buses at just £5,495 each.

1988/89 (E/F) Renault S56 Mark II Northern Counties 25-seat buses, coachbuilt front ends, power steering, automatic gearboxes, Perkins Phaser Turbodiesel engines, red interiors, new MoT's, three available from just £4,995 each.

1987 (E) Renault S56 Northern Counties bus, power steering, Perkins 4-cylinder turbo, automatic gearbox, very unusual specification with 27 seats and 6 standees plus luggage pen, attractive grey/blue/red moquette interior, side emergency exit, new MoT, very rare, £5,995.

1987 (D) Dodge S56 East Lancs service bus, power steering, power door, luggage boot, Perkins 4-cylinder turbo, automatic gearbox, 27 seats plus 2 standees, brown patterned moquette interior, new MoT, could reseat to 29 if required, unique, £5,995.

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1990 (G) Iveco 49.10 Reeve Burgess 25-seat buses, PAS.

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1986 (C) Ford Transit 16-eat coach, Trimoco "Sweet 16".

1988 (E) Freight Rover Carlyle Mark II 20-seat bus, with heavy-duty automatic gearbox, one only, very rare.

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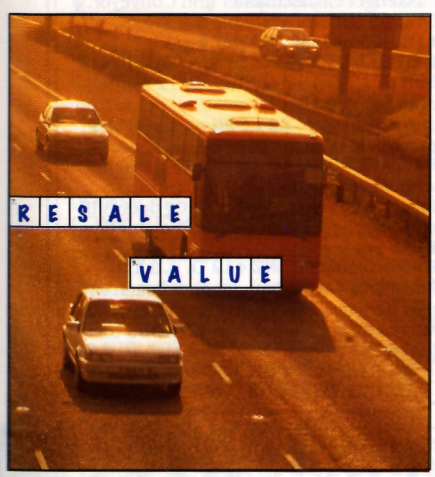

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Over the years, Jubilee have produced some of the finest Executive Midi Coaches on the road today. Attention to detail, superb design features and stylish good looks afford our customers the privilege of standing out from the crowds in a competitive market place.
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P IVECO FORD 49-10 TD Conveyor 19 seater contract midi bus. Hi-back seats, power door. Small rear boot, lap belts and much more for just **£27,995 or £131 per week**

P IVECO FORD 49-10 TD. Executive Pullman 19 seater. IN STOCK NOW. This superb midi coach is beyond compare. It has the lot. **£35,995 or just £178 per week**

P RENAULT MESSENGER B110 TD. 18 seater midi bus and midi coach range. Extra rugged construction. Choice of specifications from **£28,995 or just £139 per week**

P MERCEDES BENZ 611 TD luxury 19 seater midi coach. Full sized M3 coach seats. Options for plug door, skirts, air con, TV, from **£37,995 or just £187 per week**

P MERCEDES BENZ 711 TD. Super luxury 24 seater with rear boot. This is simply the best executive midi coach in the UK. All options. **From £44,995 + VAT**

P SERVICE BUSES AND STAGE CARRIER. Jubilee cover a full range of Mercedes and Iveco Ford vehicles. Please give us a call with your requirements.

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As Licensed Credit Brokers. Jubilee can offer an extensive range of finance and leasing plans tailored to the individual requirements of our customers.

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M LDV 400 D AX-S. M2 seating/belts. Lux trim. New conversion. PLS under floor chair lift. Low entry steps. Choice from **£20,995 or just £110 per week**

M FORD TRANSIT Diesel 8 seaters with wheelchair tracking. Choice of specs and layouts including M2 seats/belts, etc. From **£11,995 or just £65 per week**

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H VAUXHALL MIDI with chair lift. Low mileage, mint condition 6 seater with tracking for 2/3 wheelchairs. Only **£8995**

P JUBILEE are the leading UK manufacturers of wheelchair accessible vehicles.
Our range of AX-S and Liberty buses is huge.
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VAT qualifying vehicle . . .
N Galaxy 2.0 GLX. 4000 miles only. Fully loaded. A chance to reclaim the VAT on a nearly new vehicle. Only £14,995 + VAT
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C MERCEDES BENZ 307 D. Repainted. Under floor chair lift. Luxury trim and seating. Front entry. Excellent driver. **£4995**

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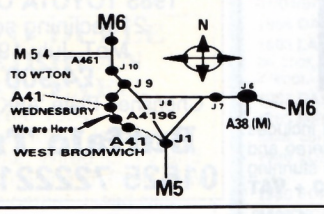

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Either 16 passengers with a huge boot or 19 passengers and a small boot. This superb value for money range of luxury mini coaches is unbeatable.

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Over 40 safety features including:
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From 12 to 24 passengers with options for plug door, crash tested seating and belts, TV, video, air con, PA systems. Luxurious and stylish.

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This superb vehicle accommodates up to 19 passengers or 16 with an enormous boot. It is also ideal for wheelchair access carrying up to 10 wheelchairs.

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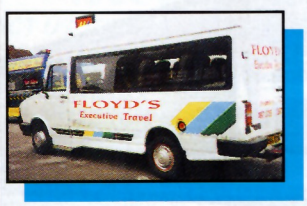
If you demand quality but insist on economy our Conveyor range is for you. Designed to offer stylish simplicity. The ideal bus for local contracts.



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Jubilee now offers the widest choice available for individual wheelchair access vehicles with over 200 specs and options on offer.

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1989 Freight Rover, 13 seats, PSV March '97. Henderson lift. **£6000**
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Order your new Auto Bus Classique 16/33 seater NOW!

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1992 MERCEDES-BENZ 410D. Diesel, 15-seater, lap/dia belts, test Jan '97 ..... **£14,000**
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1993 (L) MERCEDES 814 Plaxton Beaver Coach Spec
1992 (K) MERCEDES 814 Plaxton Beaver Coach Spec.
1991 (G) MERCEDES 709 Coach body, coach seats, dual purpose
1990 (H) TOYOTA OPTIMO, 21 seats, luxury, tv, etc, choice.
1990 (H) MERCEDES 609, 26 seat coach spec.
1990 (H) FORD TRANSIT Petrol Crew Bus
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21 luxury seats and courier, genuine 70,000 miles, 1 owner, specification includes individual seat lighting and overhead blown air, hostess coll, Blaupunkt stereo and PA system, power steering, 6 cylinder turbo diesel engine, this vehicle is in stunning condition ..... **£39,950 + VAT**

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K Reg TRANSIT 190, 15 seats, diesel **£9,599**
J Reg MERCEDES 308, 13 seat diesel **£7,195**

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FORD TRANSIT, long and short wheelbase, G to M reg

CONVERSION TO CUSTOMER SUPPLIED VANS

LEYLAND DAF, conversion for 17 seat **£2,599**
FORD TRANSIT, long wheelbase, 14 seat ..... **from £2,400**
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High back, cloth covering ..... triple **£160,** double **£110,** single **£70**

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MERCEDES 611D TURBO, 24 seat, power door, high spec, large boot, MID NOVEMBER
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MERCEDES 412 SPRINTER, 16 seat, high spec, O/S emergency door, independent heater, 4 point belts, IN STOCK AND IN BUILD
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FORD TRANSIT 230, 16 forward facing seats, Hi roof, LWB, parcel racks, 4 point belts, FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY AND IN BUILT, also wheelchair access

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IVECO 49.10 Bus and Mercedes Buses Wanted with Broken Engine

Sensible Price Only Please

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FOR SALE: A selection of Stagecarriage specification Minibuses for sale. **Tel for details: 0121 386 1100.** 65644/CBW

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Mercedes 709D Auto. 1992 J. 24-seat coach with coachwork by Mellor Coachcraft, semi-luxury high back seat style, PSV test Jan 1997. CHOICE OF 7. All vehicles fitted with rear boot and emergency door **£22,500 plus VAT**

Mercedes 709D Auto. 1991 J. 19/21/23 seat coach, rear mounted wheelchair lift, coachwork by Wessex Coachworks, PSV test **£20,000 plus VAT**

Mercedes 308D. 1991 J 14-seater Minibuses. Automatic side door by Mellor Coachwork. CHOICE OF 7. All vehicles have under 80,000 kilometres (white), pristine condition throughout. 12 months warranty. PX welcome. Finance arranged **£8,495 + plus VAT**

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65782/MM

TRI-AXLE TALBOTS for sale, service spec, all white, will add fleet colour, G reg, **£4,000. No VAT. Tel 0151 424 5972. Evenings 0151 426 8632.** 65968/MB

1995 'N' REG TRANSIT
high roof minibuses, Mellor conversion, 15 M2 tested seats with lap & diagonal belts (or 12 seats with luggage cages), all white but can be sprayed to your livery -
MoT Sept/Oct 1997
Choice of 2 £14,900

1985 TOYOTA OPTIMO
21 reclining seats,
MoT July 1997
£4,900
Cherished Plate 'A8KRT' offers?

Buffalo Travel
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1993 NEOPLAN CITYLINER Super High

48 seats, double courier, walk-in kitchen including microwave and percolated coffee, 2 video screens, cassette/PA, sub tropical air conditioning, toilet with hot water, cruise control, safe, Webasto, large water tanks, extra lockers, bunk, rear steer, Telma, Mercedes V8 twin turbo engine, seat belts, non-smoking.

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65966/NE

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1984 SKYLINER
Due to timewasters and loss of deposit, we have this minted coach for sale at
£43,000 plus VAT
First class condition, not usual rubbish
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SETRA S215HD
1985 (PP)
49 reclining seats + courier seat, toilet, TV/video, fridge.
ALL USUAL SETRA REFINEMENTS
Brand new rear axle.
Recently resprayed.
Excellent condition at
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65978/SET

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June 1997 (PP)
VOLVO V10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200
49 seats with belts, floor mounted toilet, repainted in white, MoT May 1997
£36,000 + VAT
NO OFFERS
Phil Anslow Travel
01495 767888
65647/VO

WANTED: VOLVO B10 JONCKHEERE P 50 OR VAN HOOL. 1984 - 1988. Preferred type - inswing door, vertical split screen, non exec 53 seats. **Contact Denis Buggy 00353 564 1264.** 65690/VO

1983 "PP" VOLVO B10M BERKHOF EVEREST, super high 49 reclining seats and courier (retrimmed), rear sunken toilet and cont door, curtains, Telma, splitter, wired for video, MoT April, '97, good conditon, **£22,500 ono + VAT. Tel 01346 571610 (Scotland).** 65645/VO

1988 VOLVO B10M IKARUS HI-LINE, 49/53 seater with demountable toilet. Webasto and Telma. Good condition with 1 year's MoT, **£42,000. Tel Cedric Coaches. 01206 824363.** 65786/VO

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NEW SCANIA L113 CRL Access Ultra Low Service Bus, 47 seats
NEW SCANIA K113 CRB IRIZAR CENTURY, 49 reclining seats, toilet, air conditioning, fridge.
NEW SCANIA K113 TRB IRIZAR CENTURY 3.7, (3 axle), 51 reclining seats, toilet, air conditioning, fridge.
All Available for Immediate Delivery

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VOLVO
1988 E VOLVO B9M VAN HOOL ALIZEE, 38 reclining seats, toilet, cont door, T.V., video, radio/P.A./cassette
1978 VOLVO B58 PLAXTON VIEWMASTER, 53 seats
1977 VOLVO B58 PLAXTON SUPREME, 53 seats

LEYLAND
1982 LEYLAND LEOPARD ECW SERVICE BUS

MAN
1993 K MAN 11/290 JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE, 51 recliner + courier, demountable toilet, continental door, TV/video, radio/cassette/PA

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1992 DENNIS JAVELIN (LOW DRIVER) PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 reclining seats,. Available now.
1987 BEDFORD YNV PLAXTON 3200, 52 seater, saloon toilet, power door, blue/grey interior, white/blue exterior. MoT 24/04/97.
1986 IVECO CAETANO VIANA, 19 seater coach, blue/grey interior, two tone blue exterior, power door. MoT 23/05/97.
1986 VOLVO B10M ALGARVE, 49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, drinks machine, wired for video, MoT 29/01/97.
1984 LEYLAND TIGER, SEMI AUTOMATIC PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 51 reclining seats, courier seat, rear offside continental door, repainted white exterior, brown interior, MoT 01/04/97.
1984 DAF LAG GALAXY, 49 reclining seats, rear nearside toilet,servery. MOT 27/05/97.
1983 LAG GALAXY, 49 re-trimmed reclining seats, courier seat, rear offside toilet, continental door, wired for video and monitor, double glazed, curtains, white/blue exterior, blue/grey interior.
1983 DAF MB200 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 reclining seats, excellent condition.
1983 MERCEDES 0303 JONCKHEERE BERMUDA, 49 seater luxury coach, centre sunken toilet, continental door, exterior, red/white/blue, interior autumn tint. MoT 16.06.97.
1980 VOLVO B58, 12 METRE PLAXTON SUPREME, 57 seater luxury coach. MoT February '97.
1980 FORD A SERIES FARO, 25 coach seats, power doors.
1980 VOLVO B58 CAETANO ALPHA, 53 seater, white exterior, autumn tint interior, power door, MoT 13/06/97.

IVECO BUS
65959/VSM

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1987 DAF MB200 Van Hool Alizee, 48 rec seats. Full executive with centre sunken toilet, TV, video and drinks, MoT June, '97. Usual Van Hool quality, **£46,000 ono. Contact Adrian on 01249 740444.**
65789/VAN

VAN ROOVEN. 1986 Odyssee, DAF SB, 42 seater Executive. Unique opportunity to purchase this classic coach. Fitted with 3 tables, rear saloon, 2 x TV, WC, double glazed with PP. MoT April, 1997. **£32,000 ono. Contact Adrian on 01249 740444.**
65790/VAN

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NORTH YORKSHIRE
1 x 1993, Volvo Plaxton Premiere 320, 53 reclining seats + courier
£99,950 Reduced to £96,000
2 x 1988 Volvo Plaxton Paramount 3500 49/53 reclining seats courier
£58,000 Reduced to £55,000
Possible Part Exchange for Older Volvo B10M's OR Modern Double Decker
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65709/VO

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46/50 reclining seats, rear galley/servery, sink, boiler, microwave, fridge, WC,
Webasto, double glazed, TV, Video, PA
3.7m high with large luggage area and rear continental exit door.
This is the first time that this type of vehicle has been offered for resale. Owned and operated by this company from new
ONLY 2 AVAILABLE AT
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1984 B10 CARIBBEAN Long MoT, recliners, rear toilet, good condition, **£18,000 + VAT.** Tel 01294 463079.
65783/VO

1987 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL Mk II
49 exec, MoT Oct 97, new engine kit fitted by Volvo, VGC
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65953/VO

VOLVO DUPLE CARIBBEAN 49 ST. EXEC.
Year 1984
Rear sunken toilet. Jason hot drinks machine. Wired for TV and video. Recent engine kit fitted. New centre isle carpet. Head rest covers. First class order throughout
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49 + courier, toilet, fridge, coffee machine, TV/video, radio/pa, continental door, double glazine, webasto, **air conditioning**.
Choice of 2 – **£98500**

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These are very high spec. midis and not to be confused with other products! MAN 190 Berkhof excellence 1000midi '93 L reg. 33 reclining vogels + courier. Double glazing, toilet, fridge, coffee machine, TV/video, radio/pa, telma, webasto and **air conditioning**. Choice of 2 – **£98500**

All these coaches come with long MOT's or we will retest without hesitation. Come and look at these vehicles. I guarantee you will not be disappointed, and do not forget on our vehicles everything works.

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1988 VAN HOOL/MERCEDES EXEC. 49 seats, toilet, wired for video and boiler, owned from new **£60,000**
1986 BOVA FUTURA/ MERCEDES EXEC. Toilet, wired for video and boiler, 49 seats, owned from new **£36,000**
1986 LAG EXEC. 49 seats, toilet, wired for video and boiler **£30,000**

ALL THREE VEHICLES SOLD WITH CHERISHED PLATES

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Mr Andy Gibbs

65777/VSM

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ECW body, 74 seats, clean.

New Lynx and Tiger rear axles

65974/VSG

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1984 DAF JONCKHEERE, 51 Str. Exec.
G reg MERCEDES 814, 33 seater Plaxton.
1983 BEDFORD YNT, 53 Seater. New MoT, DOM IV
1979 LEYLAND LEOPARD, 53 Str. DOM II
1991 LEYLAND DAF, 2.5 Diesel 16 High Back Seats
1990 LEYLAND DAF, 2.5 Diesel 16 Str. Factory Conv.
1989 MERCEDES 609D, 23 Str. Reeve Burgess
1987 X 2 FREIGHT ROVER, Service Spec 18/20 seats
1984 MERCEDES 608D, 19 Coach Seats Reeve Burgess

WANTED - YOUR SURPLUS VEHICLES - FOR CASH
PLEASE RING FOR LIST - FINANCE ARRANGED - P/X WELCOME
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65957/VSM

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NEW MARSHALL IVECO. 59/12, 27 seats, luggage pen, 6 weeks.
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NEW MARSHALL MIDI. 26/29 seats, wheelchair, Euro 2, 6 weeks.
1995 M VOLVO B10M MK IV JONCKHEERE, 51 seats, centre toilet, wired for TV and video, white exterior, 100,000 km.
1995 M MERCEDES 814, 33 seats, power door, large boot, white exterior, long MoT.
1993 L MERCEDES 814, 33 seats, power door, large boot, white exterior, long MoT.
1993 K VOLVO B6 CAETANO ALGARVE 35 seats, d/glazed rear cont door, radio, PA double glazed, MoT Jan, '97.
1991 H LEYLAND DAF 400, 16 seat minicoach, seat belts, rear underfloor tail-lift, white exterior.
1990 H MERCEDES 811D, PMT, AMI, coach built, 33 seats, luggage racks, power door, radio, white/red, exterior, long MoT.
1990 G MERCEDES TAZ, Dubrava, recent exchange engine, 53 seats, power door, radio/PA, MoT April '97.
1987 E OPTARE CITYPACER 2.5 TURBO, 25 coach seats, power door, white exterior, MoT May '97.
1987 D DODGE REEVE BURGESS, 25 seats, 8 standees, power door, all white, MoT June '97.
1987 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, low driver, 53 seats, radio/PA, power door, long MoT.
1983 Y FORD 360 T DUPLE DOMINANT IV, 8.5 metre, 35 recent re-trimmed seats, p/door, radio/PA, MoT Dec '96.
1982 Y BOVA EUROPA, recent DAF engine, 52 recliners, courier seat, MoT June '97.
1977 FORD 360 T, Van Hool, 53 seats, white exterior, MoT May '97.
1976 (PP) LEYLAND LEOPARD DUPLE DOMINANT, 57 seats, white/blue exterior, MoT Aug '97.

Day telephone: 0141 776 3268 Evenings: 0141 775 1884

65798/VSG

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1175 ARGYLE STREET, GLASGOW

All Mercedes 2 years warranty or 200,000 kilometres
Choice of coach builders

NEW MERCEDES 811, diesel, extended coachbuilt, 33 service or semi coachseats, 12 standees, Diptac, wide door. Auto (Allison box), or Manual. Telma. 7 days. Auto

NEW MERCEDES 709 29 + 8 Standees with Power door, Diptac, choice of bodies + Auto. Stock £43,500

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NEW MERCEDES 814, diesel, extended coachbuilt luxury, coach spec, power swivel door, large boot, forced air. 33 coach seats. 7 days. £57,000

NEW MERCEDES 711 Turbo, coach built, £48,000 29 lux, P.door, l. boot, coach spec. Stock

NEW 711 Turbo, conversion. 24 seat Luxury, boot, P swivel door, coach spec. 7 days. £43,000

NEW MERCEDES 611D, 24 seats, full spec, boot, power door, luggage racks, radio cassette, coach spec. Stock

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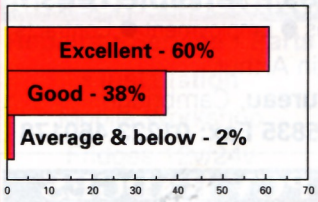

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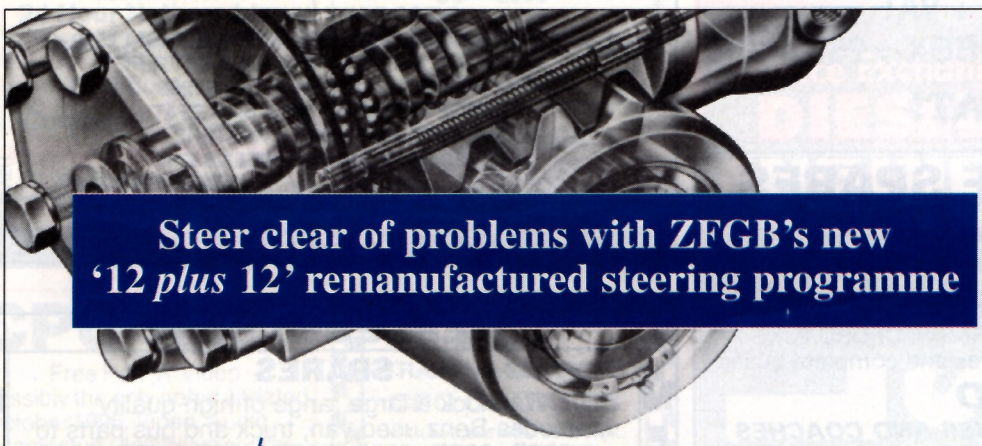

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Forms including full details are available on application to the Director of Planning and Transportation, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2SG, marked for the attention of the Public Transport Officer, and must be returned to the Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Solicitor not later than 2 pm on Thursday, 21 November 1996.

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MTL TRUST HOLDINGS LIMITED

(65756/APP

▼ Engineering

Gardner post

AS Gardner continues to expand its worldwide business activity, the company has appointed Allan Littlemore business development manager.

It is a newly-created position for the Manchester-based engine manufacturer and Mr Littlemore joins from his position as manager with ABB in Derby.

It is his second spell with Gardner, having previously been engine division manager from 1984 to 1990. He was previously with Foden trucks.

▼ Minibus

Whitacres` sales chief

by Mike Morgan

KEITH Clarke has been appointed sales director of Whitacres, the Stoke-on-Trent based builder of accessible minibuses for the voluntary and public sector since 1947.

Managing director David Hardacre welcomed Mr Clarke back to the company after spending two years with Granning UK where he launched the Maxidrop lowering suspension.

Mr Clarke said: "I have been keen to return to selling complete vehicles again, not just suspensions." He said that Whitacres had a strong foundation for making very positive plans for the future.

Md David Hardacre welcomes Keith Clarke

▼ Consultancy

Mulroy and Bailes form specialist outfit

TWO well-known personalities in the transportation industry have joined forces to form a new specialist consultancy, Transportation Planning (International) Ltd.

Terry Mulroy, who retired in July after 30 years with TPA, more recently part of the Oscar Faber Group, has linked with Alan Bailes, who was previously an associate director of TecnEcon until its Birmingham office closed in July.

▼ Tyres

Goodyear for Hitchcroft

MARK Hitchcroft has taken on a key role within Goodyear's fast-growing retread business. He has been appointed manager of casing operations based at the company's Wolverhampton factory, bringing more than 10 years experience covering passenger vehicle and truck tyres.

CBW Coach and Bus Week
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YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title? (Tick one only)

Owner/Director ❒01
Senior/General Manager ❒02
Engineering/Service Manager ❒03
Other (please specify) ❒04

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator ❒01
Coach Operator ❒05
Coach & Bus Operator ❒02
Local Government ❒03
Other (please specify) ❒04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate? (Tick all that apply)

	Buses	Coaches
1-5	❒01	❒10
6-10	❒02	❒11
11-15	❒03	❒12
16-25	❒04	❒13
26-39	❒05	❒14
40-100	❒06	❒15
101-400	❒07	❒16
401-1000	❒08	❒17
1000 +	❒09	❒18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/ purchase and/or specification of the following? (Tick all that apply)

	Pur	Spec	Rec
Vehicles	❒01	❒12	❒23
Parts/Spares	❒02	❒13	❒24
Oil/Fuel	❒03	❒14	❒25
Breakdown	❒04	❒15	❒26
Insurance/Finance	❒05	❒16	❒27
Fuel Cards	❒06	❒17	❒28
Training	❒07	❒18	❒29
Venue/Attraction Tickets	❒08	❒19	❒30
Ferry Crossing	❒09	❒20	❒31
Hotel Bookings	❒10	❒21	❒32
Theatre Tickets	❒11	❒22	❒33
Other (please specify)			❒34

5. What type of work does your company undertake? (Tick all that apply)

Private Hire ❒01
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